US court increases Mark Jimenez bail by $100,000

Story on PAGE A2

2 NHA execs deny link to Kintanar slay

By Christian V. Esguerra

WHO are the two National Housing Authority (NHA) officials suspected of setting up the assassination of Romulo "Rolly" Kintanar by his former comrades on Jan. 23?

Feeling alluded to by the question posed by Chief Supt. Romeo Maganto, head of

2 NHA/ A17

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

'We thought we had found Yamashita gold'

GINTO NA, NAGING BOMBA PA!

TUBLAY, Benguet—For a few hours last year, the starry-eyed road workers thought they had found part of the famous Yamashita treasure. They saw "mustard-colored" bars inside four rot-

WE/ A17

email: feedback@inquirer.com.ph Tuesday, February 4, 2003 ★★★ 50 pages / 3 sections / vol. 18 / no. 58 P15 website: www.inq7.net

OFWs assured of safety

500,000 Filipinos may lose Saudi jobs

RIYADH—The largest employer of Filipino workers in the Middle East decided on Sunday to reduce the number of foreigners it would accept into its territory.

Striving to create more jobs for its citizens, Saudi Arabia has decided to lower the number of foreigners in the kingdom to a maximum of 20 percent of its indigenous population within the next decade.

The decision, issued by Interior Minister Prince Nayef bin Abdul Aziz, chair of the Manpower Council, also stipulates a quota system for foreign nationalities. Under the system, no nationality may exceed 10 percent of the total by 2013.

The decision means that the number of Filipino contract workers in Saudi Arabia, currently estimated at 950,000, will be reduced by about half a million in the next 10 years.

The news, with its economic implications, couldn't have come at a worse time. The jobs of some 1.5 million Filipino workers in the Middle East may be at some risk if a US-led international coalition decides to invade Iraq for harboring weapons of mass destruction.

There are between six and seven million foreign workers and family members living in Saudi Arabia, which has a local population estimated at around 17 million.

The decision calls for a gradual

500,000/ A19

"KISSING bandit." President Macapagal laughs as her cat-quick close-in security stops a Filipino worker from kissing her at Kuwait City's Bayan Palace on Sunday. To whoops and cheers, the President assured Filipinos that her administration would protect them . REUTERS

'I will do whatever it takes,' GMA vows

By Carlito Pablo

NOT a single overseas Filipino worker will be hurt or lose his job even if war breaks out in the Middle East.

Addressing an enthusiastic crowd of Filipino workers, the President yesterday assured the country's 1.5 million contract workers in the troubled region that the government would do "whatever it takes" to protect them in the event of war in neighboring Iraq.

At a carnival-style meeting in a huge tent on the grounds of a palace of Kuwait's ruling Sabah family, President Macapagal-Arroyo provided no details of the emergency evacuation plan, but her words of comfort drew warm applause from the boisterous crowd of some 700 homesick workers, many of whom craned their necks to get a glimpse of her as they stood in an audience area segregated by gender.

"I come here primarily to assure our Filipino community that your government cares about you," she said. "We will do whatever it takes to keep you out of harm's way. Our utmost responsibility is the safety and welfare of the Filipinos in the Middle East."

Ms Macapagal told the crowd the plan involved a "comprehensive package of measures and programs primarily aimed at ensuring your safety and protection

OFWS/ A19

BRAWL IN MOALBOAL

German dove stabs American hawk over Iraq

By Jhunnex Napallacan
PDI Visayas Bureau

CEBU CITY—A German national on vacation has learned a valuable lesson: Never discuss the impending attack by the United States on Iraq, especially with a former US Marine.

Frank Oesterle, a German economist from Munich, is now detained at a police station in Moalboal town, 90 km from here, after stabbing American John Flynn inside a bar on Friday following a heated argument over the US plan to attack Iraq.

"It is not good to discuss politics when you are on vacation. Maybe you can talk about the nice beaches, nice foods and the nice women here," Oesterle, 37, told the INQUIRER yesterday.

He said he was sorry for what happened and was willing to apologize to Flynn, 41.

The American suffered five

GERMAN/ A19

2,000 doctors taking nursing to land US jobs

By Alex V. Pal, *PDI Visayas Bureau*
and Ferdinand O. Zuasola, *PDI Mindanao Bureau*

DUMAGUETE CITY—About 50 of the 300 doctors in Negros Oriental alone have enrolled in nursing.

"In other provinces, I am told that the numbers are bigger," said provincial health officer Ely Villapando, who is expressing concern over the nationwide phenomenon of doctors studying to become nurses so they can find a job with bigger pay abroad, particularly in the United States.

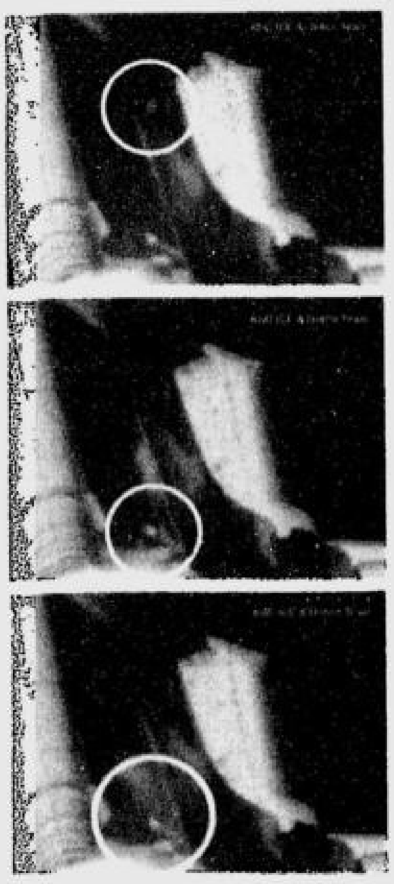
Nationwide, some 2,000 physicians are taking up nursing, according to the Philippine Nurses Association. In June, 2002, more than 100 doctors took the nursing board examinations.

A government doctor in Bais City, Negros Oriental, who asked not to be identified, said he enrolled in nursing so that he could earn more.

"We will be earning in one month in the United States as nurses what we make here in the Philip-

2,000/ A17

Could Nasa have saved astronauts?



IN THIS sequence of images taken from video supplied to the newspaper Florida Today, what appears to be debris (viewed top to bottom) is seen striking the underside of the left wing of the space shuttle Columbia during its ascent into space on Jan. 16, 2003.

(AP PHOTO/FLORIDA TODAY VIDEO)

CAPE CANAVERAL, Florida—If liftoff damage to Columbia's thermal tiles caused the disaster, was the crew doomed from the very start?

Or could Nasa have saved all or some of the seven astronauts by trying some Hollywood-style heroics—a potentially suicidal spacewalk, perhaps, or a rescue mission by another shuttle?

Some of the ideas that have been suggested would have been highly impractical, dangerous and perhaps futile.

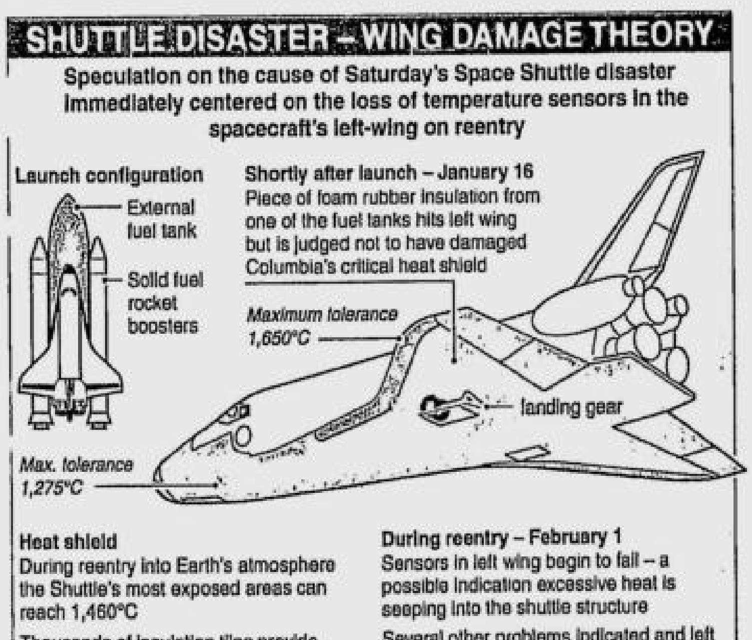
The shuttle does not carry spare tiles, and Nasa insists there was nothing on board that the crew could have used to repair or replace missing or broken ones. In any case, the space agency believed at the time that the tile damage was nothing to worry about and thus nothing worth risking a life over.

Still, as James Oberg, a former

COULD/ A6

SHUTTLE DISASTER – WING DAMAGE THEORY

Speculation on the cause of Saturday's Space Shuttle disaster immediately centered on the loss of temperature sensors in the spacecraft's left-wing on reentry



Shortly after launch – January 16
Piece of foam rubber insulation from one of the fuel tanks hits left wing but is judged not to have damaged Columbia's critical heat shield

Heat shield
During reentry into Earth's atmosphere the Shuttle's most exposed areas can reach 1,460°C

Thousands of insulation tiles provide protection and, while a few are lost on each flight, the loss of many tiles in one area could prove catastrophic

During reentry – February 1
Sensors in left wing begin to fail – a possible indication excessive heat is seeping into the shuttle structure

Several other problems indicated and left main landing gear loses tyre pressure

1400 GMT, 16 minutes from home
Contact lost 64 km above the Earth

Source: The Cambridge Encyclopedia of Space **REUTERS**

THE ASTRONAUTS MEMORIAL

A CANADIAN tourist embraces his son as they pay tribute to the crew of the space shuttle Columbia at the Astronauts Memorial on the grounds of the Kennedy Space Center Visitors Complex on Sunday in Florida. AP

Shuttle temperature rose 60 degrees over 5 minutes

CAPE CANAVERAL, Florida—Engineers of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (Nasa) settled into their long, joyless task of figuring out how space shuttle Columbia broke apart, saying conditions in the shuttle's final minutes point to a possible problem with its critical heat-protection tiles.

Nasa says new evidence shows that the temperature on Columbia's left side shot up and the ship was buffeted by greater wind resistance before it disintegrated over Texas, killing all seven astronauts aboard. Those conditions forced its automatic pilot to quickly change course.

The combination of these events suggests that thermal tiles may have been damaged during launch. The shuttle's exterior is covered with thousands of tiles designed to protect it from the extreme heat of reentry.

Despite the possible clues, shuttle program manager Ron Dittemore stressed Sunday that the information was only preliminary.

"We've got some more detec-

SHUTTLE/ A6

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST. Luzon, Eastern Visayas and Mindanao will experience mostly cloudy with scattered rainshowers. The rest of the country will have partly cloudy to cloudy skies with isolated rainshowers.
SOURCE: PAGASA

Metro Manila	Cloudy with Rains	Iloilo/Bacolod	Partly Cloudy
Baguio	Cloudy with Rains	Roxas	Partly Cloudy
Tuguegarao	Cloudy with Rains	Cebu	Cloudy with Rains
Laoag	Cloudy with Rains	Tacloban	Cloudy with Rains
Clark Zone	Cloudy with Rains	Gen. Santos	Cloudy with Rains
Tagaytay	Cloudy with Rains	Zamboanga	Cloudy with Rains
Legazpi	Cloudy with Rains	Cagayan de Oro	Cloudy with Rains
Calapan	Cloudy with Rains	Davao	Cloudy with Rains

COMPILED BY: RAY LEYESA, PDI RESEARCH/02/04/03

Court hikes Jimenez's bail by $100,000

By Donna S. Cueto

THERE SEEMS to be no end to the woes of Manila Rep. Mark Jimenez who is in jail in the United States.

The required bail for Jimenez's release has been increased from $500,000 to $600,000, according to undersecretary and justice department spokesperson Merceditas Gutierrez.

The additional $100,000 was for an old charge of violating US immigration laws.

Jimenez voluntarily flew to the US in December after fighting for years a US request for his extradition on charges of mail fraud, tax evasion and making illegal campaign contributions, among other raps.

"The bail would now amount to $600,000. I was not informed how much he has to put up," Gutierrez told reporters yesterday, quoting sources in the US Embassy.

Gutierrez said that as far as she knew, Jimenez had yet to post the required bond.

She explained that the immigration violation charge was an old one that had been filed even before Jimenez's voluntary extradition. The charge stemmed from a previous stay in the US, she said.

"That was served on him when he arrived in Miami, Florida," Gutierrez said, adding that she had no details of the case.

JIMENEZ

The Florida court hearing the Jimenez case had set certain conditions for his bail: a $300,000 surety bond and $200,000 in cash; a requirement that Jimenez's relatives act as bail guarantors, and "proof" that the bail money came from legitimate sources.

Earlier reports said Jimenez appeared to be having difficulty in raising the bail money, thus delaying his arraignment for at least two weeks.

Last year, the National Bureau of Investigation said that Jimenez had declared that he was worth P355,852,367.62, or $6.7 million.

Based on a statement of assets and liabilities that he submitted to the Commission on Audit on April 30, 2002, Jimenez declared total assets of P435,852,367.62, but placed his liabilities at P80 million.

The NBI said, however, that Jimenez had told the Florida court that he had only a "minimal amount" of money, much less than the amount he had declared in his statement of assets and liabilities last year.

According to a 1999 federal indictment, Jimenez had allegedly made illegal donations to former US President Clinton and other Democratic Party politicians. Jimenez had allegedly used money from his Miami company and a subsidiary to reimburse employees who purportedly made the donations.

Jimenez is also accused of illegally routing $50,000 to the Democratic National Committee and $33,500 to local Democratic campaign committees from 1994 to 1996.

Nene: No funds available for absentee voting law

By C. Balana

CONGRESS may have to slash the budgets of several departments and agencies in order to raise the funds necessary to implement the proposed absentee voting law for some 7.3 million Filipinos overseas.

This according to Sen. Aquilino "Nene" Pimentel who said funds for implementing the measure were not included in the 2003 national budget.

Pimentel said the only alternative was for Congress to enact a supplemental budget to defray the expenses of the Commission on Elections in preparing for and conducting absentee voting in the 2004 national elections.

The draft law on absentee voting is expected to be signed by members of the conference committee today and submitted to both chambers of Congress later in the day for adoption.

The President is expected to sign it within 24 hours of its transmittal from Congress.

Sen. Edgardo Angara said the law would be subject to a mandatory review in 2006, or two years after its application in the forthcoming polls.

Angara, the measure's principal sponsor in the Senate, said the review would enable legislators to improve its provisions and safeguards, and make it a more effective venue for overseas Filipinos' participation in the country's political process.

The signing of the conference committee report is set at 11 a.m. at the Department of Foreign Affairs Summit Lounge. Invited to witness are Foreign Secretary Blas Ople, Labor Secretary Patricia Sto. Tomas, Overseas Workers Welfare Administrator Virgilio Angelo and Philippine Overseas Employment Administrator Rosalinda Baldoz.

HOPING FOR ENLIGHTENMENT
The children and other relatives of the five men who were convicted in the Rolando Abadilla murder case staged yesterday a "candle-lighting ceremony" at the Supreme Court. A Quezon City court sentenced the five to death for the murder of Abadilla, a dreaded intelligence officer during the Marcos regime, but serious doubts have been raised about the judicial process that the five went through.
ERIK ARAZAS

Lacson's US supporters start drive to pay $3M judgment

By Gerald G. Lacuarta

AS IF to prove that the million-dollar bank accounts he was said to have in the United States were non-existent, Sen. Panfilo Lacson reportedly turned to Filipinos based in Los Angeles, California for help in his battle against a US court ruling ordering him to pay a businesswoman $3 million.

The opposition senator needs money for the legal services of Michael A. Cardozo, the San Francisco lawyer he has hired to get the Superior Court of Alameda County to reverse a decision awarding Blanquita Pelaez the millions in damages over a controversial handcuffs deal with the Philippine National Police.

Lacson returned Sunday from a week-long visit to California, where he inducted new officers and members of the Cavite Association of Los Angeles (CALA).

In a statement, Ed Azcuna, president of the more than 1,000-strong organization, said Filipino workers and professionals have pledged financial support to Lacson. Azcuna is a townmate of the senator from Imus.

Judge Julie Conger ordered Lacson on Jan. 10 to pay Pelaez $3,031,262, representing the balance, plus damages and interest, of the handcuffs contract that the senator, as then Philippine National Police chief, allegedly refused to pay in 2000.

"It's simply overwhelming and heartwarming to know how Filipinos respond to the needs of their countrymen, especially in times like this," Lacson said.

According to Azcuna, one of the first contributors to the Lacson fund was Luz Perez Alerta, a retired nurse in LA, who gave $100. He said Filipino nurses in New York City as well as Lacson's 1971 "mistahs" at the Philippine Military Academy, who are now retired or living in the US, would also be "passing the hat."

Flavier throws hat into surveys ring

SEN. JUAN Flavier has agreed to include his name in presidential surveys per the request of his Lakas-CMD partymates.

"If the people want me to serve as president, so be it," said the administration senator who as Senate President Pro Tempore is sixth in the line to the presidency.

Flavier said his decision to join the presidential fray stemmed from his willingness to serve the people from a young age.

Even before he became health secretary and a senator, Flavier earned national fame for his "Doctor to the Barrios," a collection of anecdotes on his years as a rural health physician.

His going all-out for the presidency would depend on how well he does in the surveys, the senator said.

But even if he doesn't do well, he would still be happy, he said.

On hearing that he was the reported choice of former President Ramos, Flavier said this did not surprise him as Ramos was "a good President who had a good health secretary." Flavier was Ramos' secretary of health. *Cynthia Balana*

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Transport groups seek suspension of oil tax

By Ronnel W. Domingo

TRANSPORT groups asked the government yesterday to suspend the 3-percent duty on oil imports, as Petron Corp. and other small oil players increased the prices of their gasoline by 55 centavos and diesel by 39 centavos per liter and liquefied petroleum gas by P1.70 per kilogram.

The oil firms' announcement followed Pilipinas Shell and Eastern Petroleum's price hikes Saturday night. Caltex raised its prices on Jan. 24.

New players TotalFinaElf Phil. and Seaoil Petroleum Corp. said they have matched the Big Three's pump prices.

Flying V and Unioil Phil. increased the price of their diesel by 40 centavos per liter.

An 11-kilogram cylinder of Petron Gasul and Total Gaz went up by P18.70.

The transport groups said they would not file a petition for a fare hike since diesel prices have not gone over P15.50 per liter.

But in a dialogue with energy, transportation and oil firm officials, the transport groups urged the suspension of the 3-percent import duty on oil products.

Officials of the Integrated Metro Bus Operators Association (Imboa), Federation of Jeepney Operators and Drivers Association (Fejodap) and National Confederation of Tricycle Owners and Drivers Association (Nactodap) and other groups said the levy's suspension would help bring down pump prices.

The oil import duty was suspended for three months—from November 2000 to February 2001—during a sharp increase in global oil prices.

The suspension cost the government about P5 billion in revenues, energy officials said.

However, oil executives said, the suspension would translate to a decrease in pump prices by about 35 centavos per liter.

Energy Secretary Vincent Perez Jr. said he would relay the transport group's request to Malacañang at next week's Cabinet meeting, as President Macapagal-Arroyo was in Kuwait.

Catholic youth more nationalistic than others

THE CATHOLIC youth, unlike some of their elders, have a deep sense of nationalism and would not change their citizenship even for the promise of a better life abroad.

A study done by the youth arm of the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines (CBCP) showed that 80.7 percent of young Filipino Catholics are quite content with their homegrown values and old traits.

They cited their satisfaction with good Filipino traits (*maganda ugali*), their being Catholic and godly (*Kristiyano, maka-Diyos*) and the fact that they were Filipinos.

But the more fatalistic among the 1,070 youths polled cited the fact that they were born here and this was the land that God gave them, as among the reasons they wanted to remain in the Philippines.

The study done by the CBCP's Episcopal Commission on Youth last year offered a contrasting view to another study done in 2002 that said that because of the hard times, some 20 percent of Filipinos wanted to move abroad.

In the CBCP study, only 9.3 percent of the respondents said they would change their citizenship for a better opportunity abroad.

Armand Nocum

'Why it's good to be good'

IN THE GAME of life, you have to play by the rules. The good news is you may not always end up with the highest score, but you can always be a winner.

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Lawrence travels the world teaching and sharing her wisdom and deep knowledge of the science of spirituality.

On Feb. 6 at 6:30 p.m., she will discuss "Self-Mastery: Why It's Good to be Good and Bad to be Bad" at the Mondragon House, 324 Gil Puyat Ave. (Buendia) Extension, Makati City. Admission is free. For more information, call 890-7960 or 922-9231.

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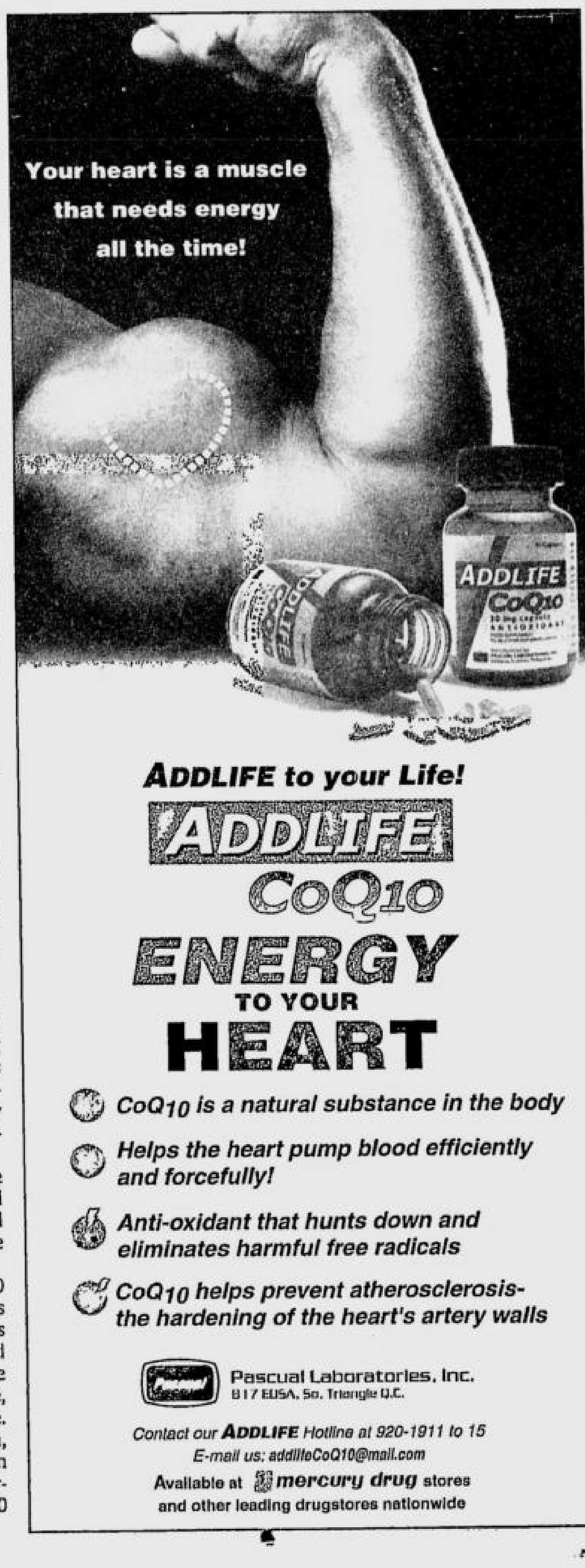

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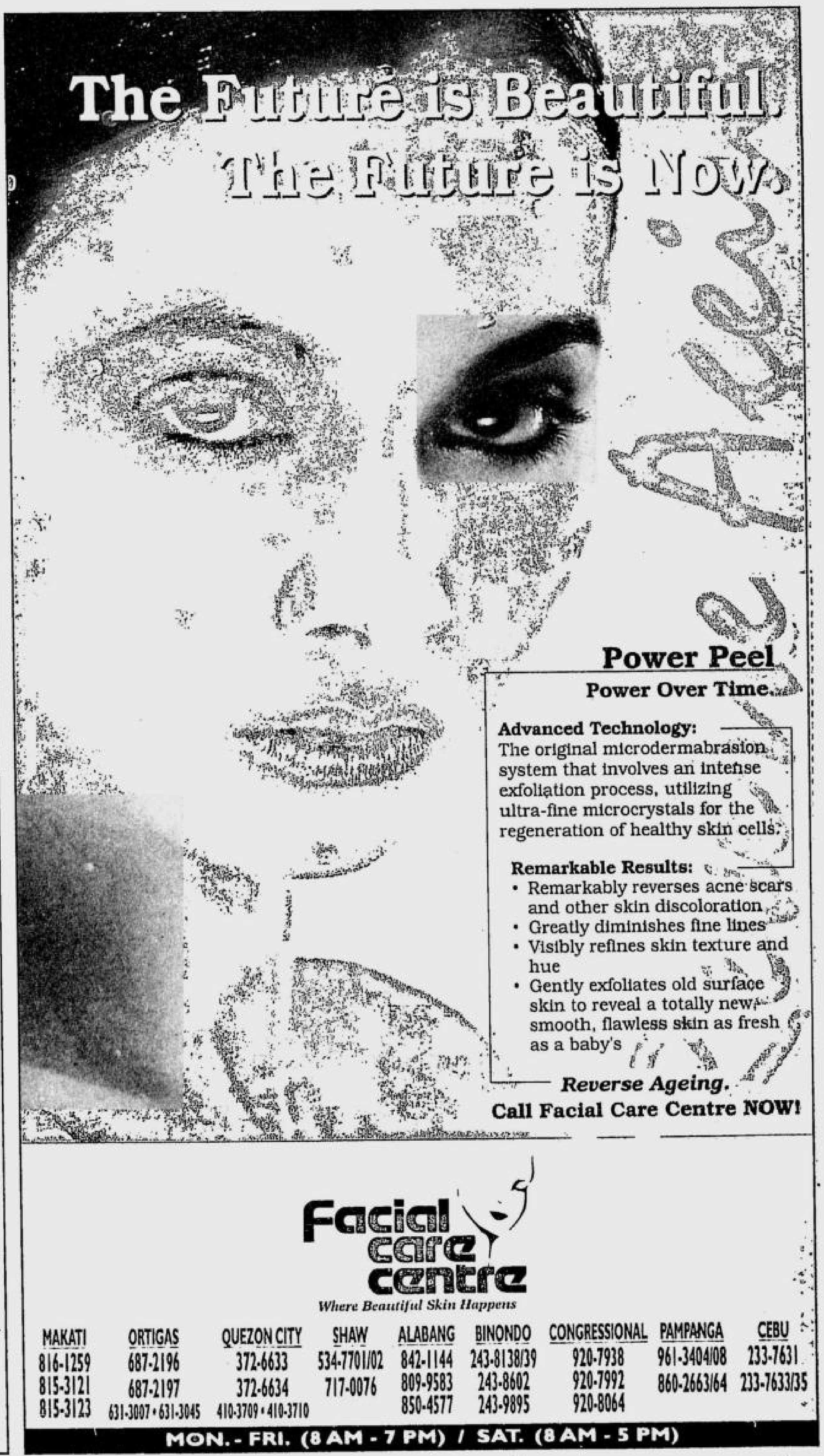

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DAILY EVENTS

10am-10pm Southern Tagalog Goes WOW
The Best of Arts and Crafts Fair
Clamshell I (Pueblo Pilipino)

Palarong Pinoy
(Exhibition of Indigenous Games) c/o Philippine Indigenous Games and Sports Savers Association, Inc. (PIGSSAI)
Plaza San Ignacio

2pm Photo Exhibit featuring Hemudo/A Day in Lhasa
Bahay Tsinoy

4pm Painting Demo (Rizal)
Real Street (Artist Row)

Pangkat Kawayan
Clamshell I (Pueblo Pilipino)

4-10pm Street Performers
(Jugglers, artist, magicians, etc.)
Gen. Luna St.

5pm Serenatas
Plaza San Ignacio

7pm Tapas Row
Gen. Luna St.

TUESDAYS, WEDNESDAYS AND THURSDAYS

5:30-9pm Acoustic Evenings by San Miguel Corporation
Cuartel de Sta. Lucia

FRIDAYS AND SATURDAYS

9pm Fireworks Display
Along the Walls

Tue February 4

10am Craft Demonstrations:
Pandan-weaving (Luisiana, Laguna)
Casa Tagala (Pueblo Pilipino)

4pm Cavite Young Artist Group
Plaza San Ignacio

6pm Onstage: Moriones and Kalutang
Clamshell I (Pueblo Pilipino)

7-9pm Onstage: UST Brass Five
Baluarte Plano Luneta de Sta. Lucia

8-8:30pm Andres Bonifacio Choral Group
Clamshell II (Pueblo Pilipino)

Wed February 5

10am Craft Demonstrations:
Paete Papier Mache Making, Fruit and Vegetable Carving and Woodcarving
Casa Tagala (Pueblo Pilipino)

4pm Pangkat Kawayan
Clamshell I (Pueblo Pilipino)

5pm Grand Parade
The Best of Festivals of Southern Tagalog
Pueblo Pilipino

7-9pm Onstage: The San Miguel Philharmonic Orchestra and The San Miguel Master Chorale
(sponsored by San Miguel Corp.)
Baluarte Plano Luneta de Sta. Isabel

9pm Fireworks Display

Thu February 6

10am Craft Demonstrations:
Wood Shaving (Pakil, Laguna)
Suman-wrapping (Rizal)
Casa Tagala (Pueblo Pilipino)

6pm Charcoal/Oil Painting Demo (Pakil, Laguna)
Real Street (Artists Row)

7pm Rene Villanueva in Retrospect
Rajah Sulayman Theatre, Fort Santiago

7-9pm Woodwind Quintet
Baluarte Plano Luneta de Sta. Isabel

8pm Onstage: Cavite Ballet Festival
Baluarte Plano Luneta de Sta. Isabel

Fri February 7

10-11am Onstage: Philippine Air Force Band
Clamshell I (Pueblo Pilipino)

4pm Orville Tiamson Painting Demo
Real Street (Artists Row)

4pm Onstage: Senakulo ng Cainta
Clamshell I (Pueblo Pilipino)

5pm Sikaran Arnis Exhibition (Rizal)
Plaza San Ignacio

6pm Onstage: Philippine High School for the Arts Cultural Group (Laguna)
Clamshell I (Pueblo Pilipino)

6pm Film Showing of "Agila"
NCCA Auditorium

6-9pm Sidemen Jazz Ensemble
Cuartel de Sta. Lucia

7pm Onstage: Dazzling Magic by Former Batangas Gov. Tony Leviste
Clamshell I (Pueblo Pilipino)

7:30pm Onstage: Nasugbu Chorale (Batangas)
Clamshell I (Pueblo Pilipino

8-12pm Onstage: Eddie Katindig & Jewelmer Jazz Band
Baluarte Plano Luneta de Sta. Isabel

Sat February 8

10am Craft Demonstrations:
Kiping-making (Quezon)
Embroidery (Taal, Batangas)
Casa Tagala (Pueblo Pilipino)

4pm Indigenous Games:
Patintero, Sungka, Bunong-braso, Tumbang-preso, Sabong
Tagayan ng Lambanog
Plaza San Ignacio

4pm Jimmy Vista Painting Demo (Rizal)
Real Street (Artists Row)

6pm Onstage: Taytay Cultural Group
Clamshell I (Pueblo Pilipino)

6pm Concert Night at the Old Walls c/o NCCA
Onstage: John Lesaca, Rachelle Gerodias, Jonathan Coo and Jco Razon
Baluarte Plano Luneta de Sta. Isabel

6-7pm UP Los Baños Dance Troupe
Cuartel de Sta. Lucia

6-7pm Onstage: PPO Brass Quintet
Puerta de Sta. Lucia

7pm Onstage: Tanauan City Musical Guild
Clamshell I (Pueblo Pilipino)

7pm Rene Villanueva in Retrospect
Rajah Sulayman Theatre, Fort Santiago

7-8pm Celso Espejo Rondalla of Las Pinas
Baluarte Plano Luneta de Sta. Isabel

7-9pm Cuatros Guitarras
Cuartel de Sta. Lucia

8-12mn Real Groove Band
Baluarte Plano Luneta de Sta. Isabel

Sun February 9

10am Craft Demonstrations:
Lumban Embroidery (Laguna) Kiping-making (Quezon)
Casa Tagala (Pueblo Pilipino)

4pm Sabong (San Jose, Batangas)
Indigenous Games:
Patintero, Sungka, Bunong-braso, Tumbang-preso, Tagayan ng Lambanog
Plaza San Ignacio

5pm Onstage: Angono National High School "Sa Ugoy ng Duyan" (Rizal)
Clamshell I (Pueblo Pilipino)

6-7pm PPO Woodwind Quintet
Cuartel de Sta. Lucia

7pm Onstage: Palawan Capitol Cultural Troupe, Pangkat Kalinangan, Sinika, Pagdiwata Festival
Clamshell I (Pueblo Pilipino)

7pm Firewalkers of Alfonso (Cavite)
Plaza San Ignacio

7-8pm Onstage: Musikito: Ang Batang Musiko
Baluarte Plano Luneta de Sta. Isabel

7-9pm Sidemen Jazz Ensemble
Cuartel de Sta. Lucia

8pm Onstage: Sining Kumintang
Clamshell I (Pueblo Pilipino)

8-9pm Bayanihan The National Dance Company of the Philippines
Baluarte Plano Luneta de Sta. Isabel

Tue February 11

10am Craft Demonstrations:
Habihan and Woodcarving of Maragondon (Cavite)
Kaluskos Art Demo (Rizal)
Casa Tagala (Pueblo Pilipino)

6pm Onstage: Palawan Capitol Cultural Troupe, Pangkat Kalinangan, Sinika of Palawan, Pagdiwata Festival
Clamshell I (Pueblo Pilipino)

6-7pm Onstage: PPO Mixed Quintet
Baluarte Plano Luneta de Sta. Isabel

Wed February 12

10am Craft Demonstrations:
Habihan and Woodcarving of Maragondon (Cavite)
Casa Tagala (Pueblo Pilipino)

4pm Onstage: Binangonan Cultural Troupe
Clamshell I (Pueblo Pilipino)

5pm Onstage: Teatro Baile de Cavite
Imus Pitch Choir, Tagaytay City National High School Dance Troupe
Clamshell I (Pueblo Pilipino)

6-8pm Onstage: PPO Percussion Quintet & MAPUA Concert Singers
Baluarte Plano Luneta de Sta. Isabel

7pm Onstage: Palawan Capitol Cultural Troupe, Pangkat Kalinangan, Sinika of Palawan, Pagdiwata Festival
Clamshell I (Pueblo Pilipino)

Thu February 13

5pm Onstage: Tariki Dance Troupe
Clamshell I (Pueblo Pilipino)

6pm Onstage: Teatro Baile de Cavite, Imus Pitch Choir, Tagaytay City National High School Dance Troupe (Cavite)
Plaza San Ignacio

6-8pm PPO Brass Quintet & Joey Ayala and Friends
Baluarte Plano Luneta de Sta. Isabel

7pm Onstage: Palawan Capitol Cultural Troupe, Pangkat Kalinangan, Sinika of Palawan, Pagdiwata Festival
Clamshell I (Pueblo Pilipino).

7pm Rene Villanueva in Retrospect
Rajah Sulayman Theatre, Fort Santiago

Fri February 14

4pm Sabong (Cuenca, Batangas)
Plaza San Ignacio

4pm Nemiranda Painting Demo (Rizal)
Real Street (Artist Row)

5pm Onstage: Antipolo Immaculate High School
Plaza San Ignacio

6pm Onstage: Lahing Batangan Dance Troupe
Clamshell I (Pueblo Pilipino)

6pm WOW Philippines Show
(sponsored by WG & A Superferry)
Baluarte Plano Luneta de Sta. Isabel

6pm Araw ng Pag-ibig/Film Showing of "Maalaala Mo Kaya"
NCCA Auditorium

6-7pm PPO String Quintet
Cuartel de Sta. Lucia

7pm Onstage: Teatro Baile de Cavite
Clamshell I (Pueblo Pilipino)

7pm Rene Villanueva in Retrospect
Rajah Sulayman Theatre, Fort Santiago

7-8pm Philippine Male Chorale
Baluarte Plano Luneta de Sta. Isabel

7-9pm Cuatros Guitarras
Cuartel de Sta. Lucia

8-12mn Retro Dance Band
Baluarte Plano Luneta de Sta. Isabel

Sat February 15

10am Craft Demonstrations:
Buntal, hat and bird-making (Quezon)
Casa Tagala (Pueblo Pilipino)

4pm Indigenous Games:
Patintero, Sungka, Bunong-braso, Tumbang-preso, Sabong, Tagayan ng Lambanog
Plaza San Ignacio

5pm Haranista ng Laguna
Plaza San Ignacio

5pm Sikaran Arnis Exhibition (Rizal)
Baluarte Plano Luneta de Sta. Isabel

6pm Concert Night at the Old Walls c/o NCCA
Onstage: VOX Manila
Post Valentine Concert
Baluarte Plano Luneta de Sta. Isabel

6-9pm Cuatros Guitarras
Cuartel de Sta. Lucia

7pm Onstage: Grand Harana
(Sta. Teresita and San Juan, Batangas)
Clamshell I (Pueblo Pilipino)

7pm Rene Villanueva in Retrospect
Rajah Sulayman Theatre, Fort Santiago

7-8pm Onstage: Musikito: Ang Batang Musiko
Baluarte Plano Luneta de Sta. Isabel

8-12mn Onstage: "Route 6"
Baluarte Plano Luneta de Sta. Isabel

Sun February 16

10am Craft Demonstrations:
Buntal, hat and bird-making (Quezon)
Pottery-making (Calamba City, Laguna)
Casa Tagala (Pueblo Pilipino)

4pm Indigenous Games:
Patintero, Sungka, Bunong-braso, Tumbang-preso, Sabong, Tagayan ng Lambanog
Plaza San Ignacio

6pm Onstage: Quartet Calambenos Professional Musicians
Clamshell I (Pueblo Pilipino)

6-7pm UP Singing Ambassadors
Baluarte Plano Luneta de Sta. Isabel

6-9pm Legato Strings
Cuartel de Sta. Lucia

7:30-9pm Cultural Show (c/o PEEPA)
Baluarte Plano Luneta de Sta. Isabel

Pro-gun protest ban with eggplants

A DAY after anti-gun groups chided President Macapagal-Arroyo for "flip-flopping" on her policy to ban the carrying of firearms outside the home, pro-gun advocates denounced the presidential directive as "despotic."

Some 20 Pro-gun officials and members staged a rally in front of the Department of Interior and Local Government in Quezon City yesterday, "armed" with eggplants and bitter melons to dramatize their "helplessness against criminal elements."

Jay-Jay Mendoza, president of the 14,000-strong Peaceful, Responsible Owners of Guns (Pro-gun), said the group should have been consulted before the ban was imposed on Jan. 30.

They later sat down with DILG Secretary Joey Lina. But Mendoza said it was hardly a "dialogue," with Lina fully upholding the President's directive. "There was no more room for (compromise)."

"We want the President to reconsider the revocation of PTCFORs (permit to carry firearms outside residences)," Mendoza said. "We protest the manner in which the ban is being implemented. We believe the decision was arbitrary." *Alcuin Papa and TJ Burgonio*

Ex-governor's brother slain

By Edwin O. Fernandez
and Charlie C. Señase
PDI Mindanao Bureau

COTABATO CITY—Two men on a motorcycle shot and killed the brother of former Maguindanao Gov. Zacaria Candao yesterday morning. The victim was with his 9-year-old son at the time.

Senior Supt. Sanggacala Dampac, city police chief, said Abdulkadir Candao, 65, elder brother of the ex-governor, succumbed to a gunshot wound in the head.

Candao was taking his son to school in his black Isuzu Highlander when the suspects on a black motorcycle overtook the AUV and opened fire.

Witnesses said they saw the motorcycle tailing Candao's vehicle on busy De Mazenod Avenue. As the car approached the intersection of De Mazenod and Notre Dame Avenues, they said one of the suspects fired at Candao's vehicle.

Candao's son, Sultan, was not hit. The suspects fled toward Shariff Kabunsuan District.

Sultan said he saw the two men on the motorcycle riding close to their vehicle as his father slowed down at the intersection.

"One of them pointed a gun at papa and I heard one gun-burst," the boy said.

The Highlander rammed the concrete fence of a residential compound.

The former governor arrived at the scene minutes later and personally took charge of his brother's body. He bade his sibling goodbye with a kiss on the forehead.

The victim had been Gov. Candao's chief security officer. He took his son to the Notre Dame University Elementary Department every morning and picked him up in the afternoon.

Candao's killing came on the heels of the deaths of two sons of Andal Ampatuan, the incumbent Maguindanao governor whose clan and the Candaos are embroiled in a rivalry.

Huffer Ampatuan died in a shootout in a hotel here last Dec. 21, while his brother Saudi, the mayor of Datu Piang, Maguindanao, was killed with 16 others in a bomb attack outside his home on Dec. 24.

Ex-governor Candao said that even after the killing of the Ampatuans, his brother Abdulkadir still refused to have bodyguards.

"We have not offended anyone. My conscience is clear," Candao quoted his brother as telling him.

The Candaos and Ampatuans are related through affinity.

Candao appealed to his relatives and followers not to take the law into their own hands. "Let the law takes its course. I leave his death to Allah," he said.

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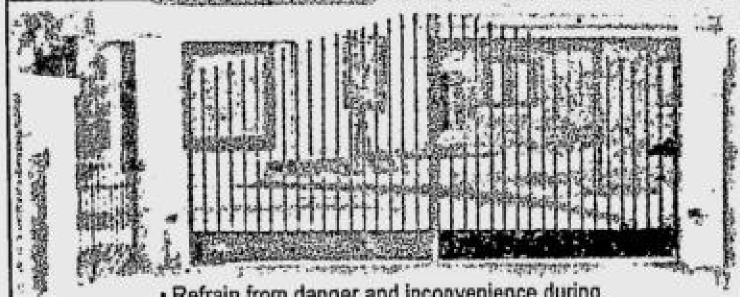

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Gemma/Raffi 2F RCBC Bldg. Zapote-Alabang Rd. 809-0396	Herlie/Madel 3/F Regina Garden II 242-1312	Sherry/Bheng 6/F Panorama Bldg., Rizal Ave. 365-7654	Riva/Mabs Basement 1&2 Ayala Center 231-3254	Analyn 27/F Atlanta Ctr. #31 Annapolis 726-6505	Jaja/Ira G/F Zeta Bldg. Salcedo St. 893-8934	Mavi/Tin 6/F Adriatico Square Adriatico, Manila 536-0619	Michelle 2F Bldg. A Mandaluyong 631-3869	Cher/Nina 887-1335 CELLPHONE 09178984744	Kaye/Malcolm Restaurant Ave. Marcos Hi-way 681-5333	Lizelle 27/F Trafalgar Dela Costa St. 814-0138	Ruth/Gie 2/F Annex Bldg. Quezon City 929-5429	Beth 2/F Times Square Rizal Hi-way 252-6514

Shuttle temperature rose 60 degrees over 5 minutes

From page A1

tive work," Dittemore said. "But we're making progress inch by inch."

While engineers at the Johnson Space Center in Houston analyzed billions of bits of electronic data radioed to Earth by Columbia on Saturday morning, state and federal officials collected bits and pieces of the shattered spacecraft over a broad swath of east Texas and Louisiana.

The debris was being catalogued and trucked to an Air Force base in Louisiana. Some human remains also have been recovered from the astronaut crew.

President George W. Bush had arranged a meeting Monday with Nasa Administrator Sean O'Keefe to get an update on the disaster.

Abnormal readings

Computer data indicate that moments before Columbia broke apart on Saturday on its way toward a landing in Florida, temperatures rose in the wheel well and on the fuselage on the left side of the shuttle. The abnormal readings were on the same side of the craft that was hit by peeling fuel-tank insulation during the craft's Jan. 16 launch, Nasa engineers said.

Dittemore said engineers also were planning to examine 32 seconds of computer data that earlier had been ignored because it was considered flawed. The data came just before all communications with Columbia were lost.

Nasa engineers spotted the peeling fuel tank insulation on high speed cameras that recorded the launch of Columbia. Dittemore said the possible effects on the tiles from the insulation were studied aggressively while the shuttle was still aloft, but engineers concluded "it did not represent a safety concern."

"As we gather more evidence, certainly the evidence may take us in another direction," he said.

Dittemore said engineering data show a rise of -7 degrees Celsius to -1 degree Celsius in the left wheel well about 7 minutes before the spacecraft's last radio transmission. There followed a rise of about 60 degrees over 5 minutes in the left hand side of the fuselage above the wing, he said.

The shuttle temperature rose the normal -9.44 degrees Celsius on the right side over the same period, he said. All the readings came from sensors underneath the thermal tiles, on the aluminum hull of the craft.

The temperature spikes were accompanied by an increased drag, or wind resistance, that forced Columbia's automated flight control system to make rapid adjustments maintain stability. Dittemore said the corrections were the largest ever for a shuttle re-entry, but still within the craft's capability.

MOURNERS, bringing memorial items for the Columbia astronauts, crowd the main gate of the Johnson Space Center in Houston, Texas, on Sunday. AP

Old version of fuel tank

Lockheed, the maker of the fuel tank under scrutiny, said Sunday that Nasa had used an older version of the tank, which the space agency began phasing out in 2000. Nasa's preflight press information stated the shuttle was using one of the newer super-lightweight fuel tanks.

Harry Wadsworth, a spokesperson for Lockheed, said most shuttle launches used the "super-lightweight" tank and the older version was no longer made. Wadsworth said he did not know if there was a difference in how insulation was installed on the two types of tanks.

Wadsworth said the tank used aboard the Columbia mission was manufactured in November 2000 and delivered to Nasa the next month. Only one more of the older tanks is left, he said.

Dittemore said the tank, though no longer manufactured, had been used for many years and was between 2,700 kg and 3,150 kg heavier than the newer version. Still, "we had no reason to doubt its capability."

Earlier Sunday, O'Keefe named a former Navy admiral to oversee an independent review of the accident, and said investigators initially would focus on whether the piece of insulation caused the damage that brought down the shuttle.

While O'Keefe stressed that the space agency was not locking into a single scenario of what caused the crash, the insulation was "one of the areas we're looking at first, early, to make sure that the investigative team is concentrating on that theory."

For a second day, searchers scoured forests and rural areas of east Texas and western Louisiana for bits of metal, ceramic tile, computer chips and insulation from the shattered spacecraft.

State and federal officials, treating the investigation like a multi-county crime scene, were protecting the debris until it can be catalogued, carefully collected and then brought to Barksdale Air Force Base in Louisiana.

The effort to reconstruct what is left of Columbia into a rough outline of the shuttle will be tedious and painstaking.

GPS reading of debris

When a shuttle piece was located this weekend, searchers left it in place until a precise global position satellite reading could be taken. Each shuttle part is numbered; Nasa officials say experts hope to trace the falling path of each recovered piece.

The goal is to establish a sequence of how parts were ripped off Columbia as disintegrated under the intense heat and pressure of the high-speed reentry into the atmosphere.

At least 20 engineers from United Space Alliance, a key Nasa contractor for the shuttle program, were dispatched to Barksdale for what is expected to be a round-the-clock investigation.

Officials used horses and four-wheel-drive vehicles to find and recover the shuttle pieces. Divers were being called in to search the floor of Toledo Bend Reservoir, on the Texas-Louisiana line, for a car-sized piece seen slamming into the water.

Some body parts from the crew have been recovered and may be sent to a military morgue at Dover Air Force Base in Delaware. *AP*

RONA Ramon, wife of Ilan the astronaut, speaks at a press conference in Houston, Texas, Sunday. AFP

COL. Ilan Ramon, the first Israeli astronaut is seen aboard an F-16 fighter jet in this file photo. He died Saturday in the space shuttle Columbia disaster. REUTER

ELISA Nicole Garcia prays as her cousin looks on as they gather in a parking lot of a bank in Nacodogches, Texas, where a piece believed to be from the space shuttle Columbia landed. AP

Could Nasa have saved astronauts?

From page A1

shuttle flight controller and author who has been bombarded by Armageddon-type rescue ideas via e-mail, said Sunday: "They may be implausible, but not by much."

But he added: "There's always the question of miracles."

Nasa knew from Day Two of Columbia's 16-day research mission that a piece of the insulating foam on the external fuel tank peeled off just after liftoff and struck the left wing, possibly ripping off some of the tiles that keep the ship from burning up when it reenters Earth's atmosphere.

A frame-by-frame analysis of launch video and film clearly showed a clump of something streaking away from Columbia 80 seconds into the flight.

Engineers spent days analyzing the situation and concluded that there was no reason for concern. The flight director in charge of Columbia's Jan. 16 launch and Saturday's descent from orbit, Leroy Cain, assured reporters as much on Friday.

Nasa may have erred

But hours after the disaster, shuttle program manager Ron Dittemore acknowledged that Nasa might have been wrong and that wing damage on launch day might have contributed to or even caused Columbia to disintegrate on reentry.

"It's one of the areas we're looking at first, early, to make sure that the investigative team is concentrating on that theory or that set of facts as we are starting to unfold," Nasa Administrator Sean O'Keefe said Sunday.

Dittemore himself said: "My thoughts are on what we missed, what I missed, to allow this to happen."

Some facts remain:

- Nasa did not attempt to examine Columbia's left wing with high-powered telescopes on the ground, 290 km below, or with spy satellites. The last time Nasa tried that, to check Discovery's drag-chute compartment during John Glenn's shuttle flight in 1998, the pictures were of little use, Dittemore said. Besides, he said, "there was zero we could have done about it."
- Similarly, Nasa did not ask the crew of international space station to use its cameras to examine the wing when the two ships passed within a few hundred miles of each other several times over the past two weeks.
- Nasa did not consider a spacewalk by the crew to inspect the left wing. The astronauts are not trained or equipped to repair tile damage anywhere on the shuttle, least of all on a relatively inaccessible area like the underside of a wing, Dittemore said.

More questions

Could Nasa have sent another shuttle to rescue Columbia's five men and two women?

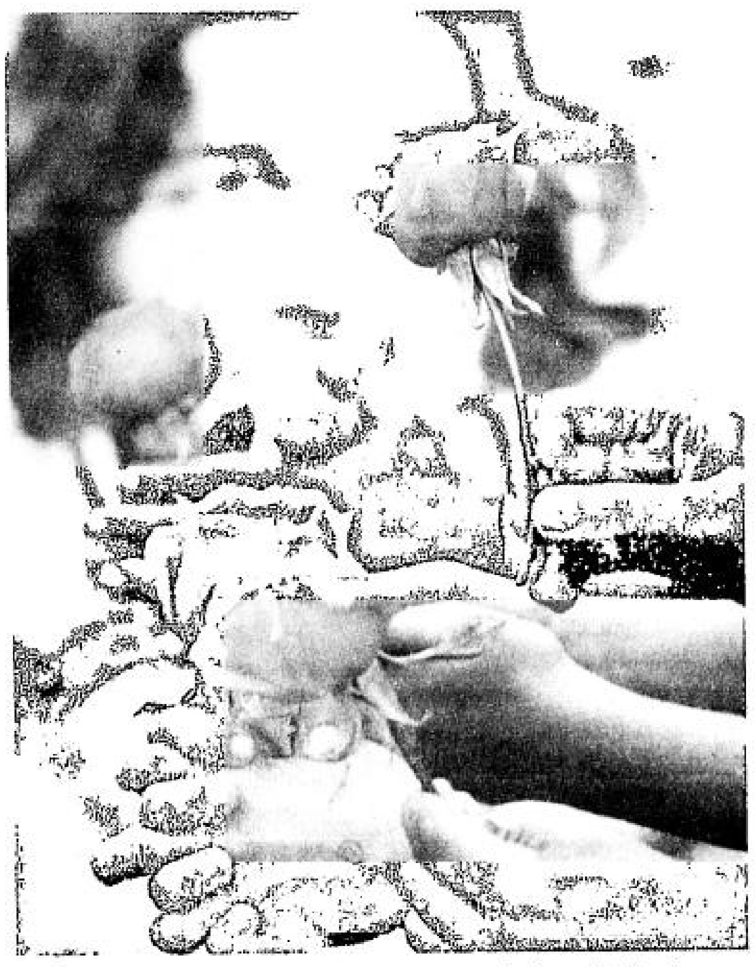
In theory, yes.

Normally, it takes four months to prepare a shuttle for launch. But in a crisis, shuttle managers say they might be able to put together a launch in less than a week if all testing were thrown out the window and a shuttle were already on the pad.

Columbia had enough fuel and supplies to remain in orbit until Wednesday, and the astronauts could have scrimped to stay up another few days beyond that. With shuttle Atlantis ready to be moved to its pad, it theoretically could have been rushed into service, and Columbia's astronauts could have climbed aboard in a series of spacewalks. If Atlantis flew with the minimum crew of two, it could have accommodated seven more astronauts.

Could Columbia's astronauts have abandoned ship and climbed aboard the international space station?

Because Columbia was in an entirely different orbit than the space station, it did not have enough fuel to fly to the orbiting outpost. Even if the shuttle could have limped there, it could not have docked. Columbia was not equipped with a docking ring since it was never meant to go there. So the shuttle astronauts would have had to float over in spacesuits to get there.



INDIAN children pray with red roses near a painting of Indian-born aerospace engineer Kalpana Chawla in Calcutta, India, on Monday. REUTERS

Could Columbia's astronauts have gone out on a spacewalk to inspect and perhaps repair their own ship?

That assumes, first of all, that the astronauts could have rigged up something, Apollo 13-style, to replace the missing tiles. But there was nothing on board, according to Dittemore and others.

Back in the early shuttle days, Nasa considered a tile-patching kit that was essentially a caulking gun, but the gunk undermined the performance of the tiles and never flew.

Spacewalk

Two of Columbia's astronauts, Michael Anderson and David Brown, were trained to do a spacewalk, and they had the suits to do it. But neither of them was trained to do anything more than a relatively simple emergency repair, like freeing a stuck radio antenna or fixing a jammed latch that could cause the ship to burn up during reentry.

Moreover, a spacewalk to reach the underside of the wings could have been suicidal, because there is nothing to hold on to, and the astronauts did not have mini-jetpacks to propel themselves. The astronauts could have floated off and never gotten back to the shuttle.

Anderson theorized just last summer on how he would go about reaching a trapdoor on the belly of the shuttle that was stuck open, in order to close it. He would have had to rig a 60-foot (18-meter) tether to a weighted bag, lasso it over one of the wings, and then crawl along the line hand over hand to reach the jammed trapdoor.

The chance of all this working, within the eight-to-nine-hour limit of a spacewalk, is practically zilch. The spacewalkers probably would not have had enough oxygen to make it back inside.

And Dittemore said Sunday that the spacewalkers could have easily worsened the situation anyway. "Just the nature of them trying to position themselves in space underneath the vehicle could have caused more damage than what we were trying to fix," he said.

Viking funeral

In theory, Nasa could have had the shuttle descend through the atmosphere at a much shallower angle of entry in hopes of relieving the heat on the ship. But that could have life-threatening dangers, too. That kind of a flight profile almost certainly would have had the shuttle coming in too fast to make a safe landing.

If it were determined that there was no way Columbia and crew could survive a reentry, and another spacecraft could not reach them in time, they would have been stuck in orbit for a couple of months before being dragged down through the atmosphere in a fireball.

"It would have been visible at dawn and dusk and that would have been pretty creepy," Oberg said. "But on the other hand, that would have been also a memorial. It would have been a Viking funeral." *AP*

IKA-2 Taong Anibersaryo ng LUNGSOD ng San Fernando

"PANYULUNG NING BUKAS BALIKID KING MILABAS"

Messages

My most cordial felicitation to the local officials and towns people of the City of San Fernando, Pampanga on the occasion of your Second Anniversary Celebration.

This festivity is a manifestation of your commitment to preserve our national identity. May the various activities that highlight the history, people, places and accomplishments of your municipality lead to a joyful and meaningful celebration. Let this momentous event spur each of us to build a strong and modern Philippine Republic.

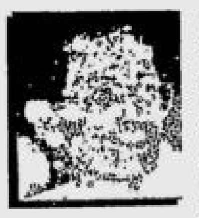
I have committed to devote the remaining months of my Administration to strengthening the economy, healing deep divisions within the society and working for clean and honest elections in 2004. I trust you are one with me in this endeavor.

The challenges that lie before us remain arduous and difficult. But with our combined efforts and self sacrifice, we will be able to rise above them and surge ahead in uniting and uplifting the Filipino people.

Mabuhay kayong lahat!

(SGD) GLORIA MACAPAGAL-ARROYO
President
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES

* * *



The symbol of the City of San Fernando is the "parol" the star. The light of faith of the Fernandinos was not overpowered by the "lahar" during the Mt. Pinatubo devastation. After June 1991 they mobilized their resources to rebuild their human and economic community with the Lord. (Ps. 127) Gradually but courageously the leaders of the city and businessmen banded together to motivate the people to join the 'Save Fernando Movement."

As we celebrate the Second Anniversary of the creation of the City of San Fernando, I pray that the Fernandinos remain grateful to God as they animate their lives with Christian commitment and shine as witnesses of the Kingdom. (Matt. 5:16)

Congratulations to Mayor Rey Aquino and Vice-Mayor Eligio Lagman.

(SGD) PACIANO B. ANICETO. D.D.
Archbishop of San Fernando

* * *

I am proud to greet my cabalens from the City of San Fernando, Pampanga as they observe the 2nd Founding Anniversary on February 4, 2003.

It is inspiring to note that the people of this regional capital have remained focused and united to sustain the drive towards a modern and dynamic metropolis.

I hope that this important event will further inspire Fernandinos to help one another and support the able leadership of Mayor Reynaldo B. Aquino in his quest to develop San Fernando into a premier city in Central Luzon.

On my part, I pledge my steadfast commitment to cooperate in the development efforts and socio-economic programs of the city administration, thus laying the foundation for continued progress in the whole Province of Pampanga.

MABUHAY!

(SGD) MANUEL M. LAPID
Governor
Province of Pampanga

* * *

It is with a profound mix of joy and pride that I join the people of the City of San Fernando in celebrating our second founding anniversary as a City.

A decade ago, San Fernando was a municipality that was reeling from the shock of volcanic fire and flood. During those depressing and confusing times, we hghad very little to look forward to.

But with perseverance, grace and foresight, we have somewhat reversed our fortunes and from the wreckage wrought by the eruption of Mt. Pinatubo, built a City that endures as a cultural and commercial center.

It is my sincere wish for all of us to stay focused in building our home and making it better.

May our sacrifices to transform San Fernando into a renaissance city that will even be greater in many more years to come.

(SGD) OSCAR S. RODRIGUEZ
Representative, 3rd District, Pampanga
Principal Author, R.A. 8990
(The law creating the City of San Fernando)

* * *

I convey my warmest felicitations to the good people of the City of San Fernando on its Second Anniversary as a component city.

This celebration is an opportunity time to highlight the rich culture and heritage of the City of San Fernando and strengthen your solidarity as a community.

Through the years the city has produced some of the brightest and equally accomplished Pampanguenos here and abroad. I hope this gathering will inspire Fernandinos to continue upholding inherent Filipinos values-faith in God, love of country and fellowmen and service to the community.

Let us make this celebration more relevant by refraining from useless spending and wasteful extravaganza while focusing your resources and energies on the further development of your locality. Our tasks at hand are enormous. We still face daunting challenges to realize our aspiration of growth and progress for Pampanga. With diligence, industry and solid kinship alongside an effective and responsive in the years to come.

With these thoughts, I look forward to your positive contributions in our efforts to steer the Province of Pampanga and our nation towards greater peace and progress.

MORE POWER TO ALL FERNANDINOS!
MABUHAY!

(SGD) JUAN MIGUEL M. ARROYO
Vice-Governor
Province of Pampanga

* * *

I join my fellow Fernandinos in celebrating the second anniversary the City San Fernando on February 4, 2003.

This year's celebration carries the Theme: *"PANYULUNG NING BUKAS, BALIKID KING MILABAS"*, which aims to reflect the unwavering commitment of the City Government to continue sustaining our growth and development, while recollecting to punctuate the lessons of past experience for which to learn for the better.

As we now enjoy the City's gain for the past two years, I encourage my cabalens to remain steadfast, and be united in our quest for more heights of success.

Looking back the calamitous challenges behind our struggle, we have all the reasons to strive more, henceforth, since prospects are brighter and better ahead of us with our improved cash flow, and hopefully tax conscious citizenry.

MABUHAY! Luguran taya ing Siyudad San Fernando.

(SGD) REY B. AQUINO
City Mayor

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Chairman
Engr. Romel S. Salvador
Ivan Anthony Henares
Vice-Chaimen

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BarryPangilinan
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Ronnie S. Mallari, Ph. D
Myrna N. Manabat
Bernadette S. Jimenez
Lou T. Binuya
Ivan M. Pineda
Mario "Adong" S. Evangelista
Rommel G. Del Rosario
Jeng C. Beltran · Arch. Mel A. Pineda
Felix M. Garcia · Edwin H. Gutierez

Schedules of Activities

January 29 - Wednesday

- Ligligan Poesia (Oratorical Contest) for Elementary (Finals), 8:00 a.m. at Del Pilar Elementary School
- Essay Writing Contest (for high school, 8:00 a.m. at Del Pilar Elementary School
- Pulosa Competition, 6:30 p.m. at the Church Patio
- Photo Exhibit on the Gains of Cityhood, at the Bulwagan ding Alkalde City Hall of San Fernando until February 4.
- Ground Breaking Ceremonies of various infrastructure projects, 9:00 am

January 30 - Thursday

- Medical Mission, whole day in front of the City Hall of San Fernando
- City Choral Competition, 6:30 p.m. at the Church Patio

January 31 - Friday

- Ceremonial Tree Planting, 7:00 a.m. at the various intersection islands
- City-Clean Up Drive and Launching of the City Clean-Up drive, 8:00 a.m.-12 noon simultaneous all over the City
- Kapampangan Cultural Knight, 6:30 p.m. at the Church Patio

February 1 - Saturday

- City Fun Run (5k and 10k), 6:00 a.m.
- Variety Show and Concert, 6:30 p.m. at Robinsons Starmills

February 2 - Sunday

- Karera king Tersera (1st Dr. Rey B. Aquino cycling tour), 7:00 a.m.
- Tilbury Race, 1 p.m. at Lazatin Boulevard

February 3 - Monday

- Little Sex Bomb and hip hop dance contest, 4:00 p.m. at the Poblacion area
- Most Outstanding Fernandino Awards 2003, 4:00 p.m. Holidayland

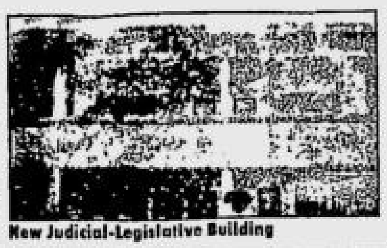
February 4 - Tuesday

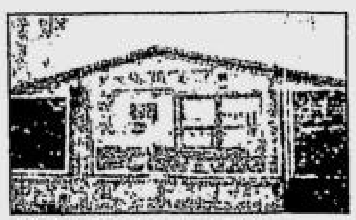
- Ecumenical Services, 8:00 a.m. at the Church Patio
- Flag Raising Ceremonies, 8:30 a.m. in front of the City Hall of San Fernando
- Unveiling of the Restored Baluyut Bridge, 9:00 a.m.
- Blessing of the New City Hall Building, 10:00 a.m.
- Grand Parade, 3:00 p.m.
- Firework Display, 7:00 pm infront of the City Hall of San Fernando

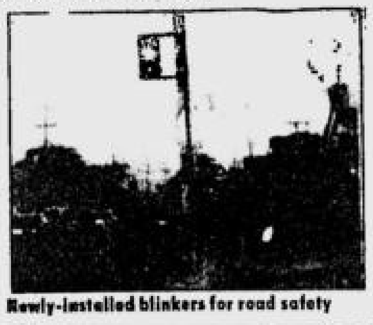
February 8 & 9 - Saturday and Sunday

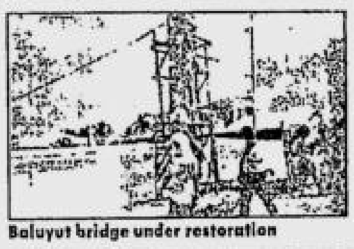
- Passport Serbilis, infront of the City Hall of San Fernando

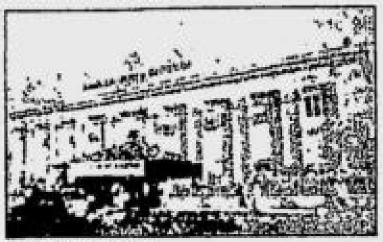
Better-lit McArthur Highway

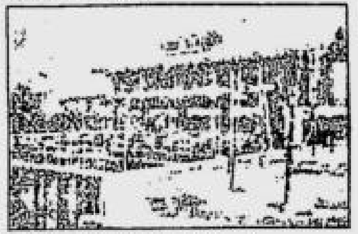

New Judicial-Legislative Building

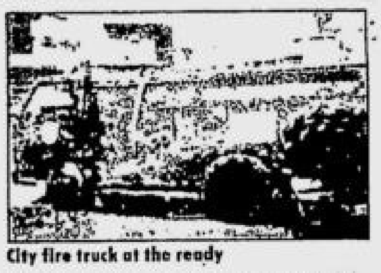

Solid waste plant


Newly-installed blinkers for road safety


Baluyut bridge under restoration


New-look city hall


Anti-flood pumping station


City fire truck at the ready

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Oscar P. Parungao
City Treasurer
Engr. Renato L. Santos
City Planning & Dev. Coordinator
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City Sports Coordinator
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City Director DILG
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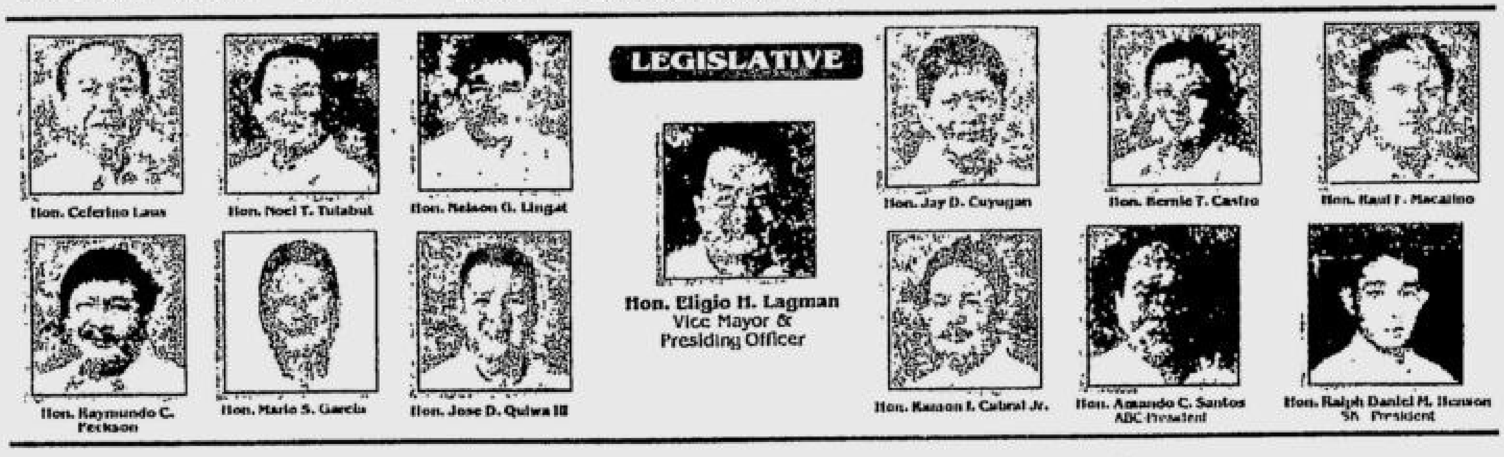
OIC-City Chief of Police
S/Insp. Myra Feliciano
City Fire Marshall
Dr. Tarcila P. Javier
OIC-City School Division

LEGISLATIVE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Hon. Amando C. Santos
ABC President
Hon. Ralph Daniel M. Henson
SK President

THE City of San Fernando, Pampanga has become the country's 99th City on February 4, 2001, after the retification of Republic Act 8990, in a Plebiscite on February 3, 2001.

Bouncing back from the ravage of calamity brought about by the Mt. Pinatubo eruption, the City of San Fernando under the stewardship of City Mayor Rey B. Aquino, has taken a giant leap in many aspects even before earning the status of a component city.

Various infra projects like upgrading of major thoroughfares, efficient garbage collection and management thru the City's composting center, have been put in place to entice more investors in infusing fresh capital to sustain the City's economy.

Training among the select roster of competent and capable nominees has been initiated thru the assistance of TESDA (Technical Education & Skills Development Assistance) creating more job opportunities and ensuring job placements.

These are but some of the hallmark of the City's achievements for the past two years, focusing on sustainable livelihood projects and viable investment climate, consistent with the poverty alleviation program of President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo.

Not to be outdone is the City Government social responsibility of improving the lot of less fortunate constituents, like providing scholarship to deserving students. Meanwhile, street children are treated with appropriate feeding and nourishment programs with the end of sending them back to their legitimate places.

With perked up financial strength thru the IRA and the improved local sourcing of funds spawned by tax consciousness campaign, the City government earned another diadem as the Most Competitive City-Small Category-in the Philippines for the year 2002. (San Fernando, Pampanga was awarded the Galing Pook Award for Breaking Financial Barrier in 2000 then as a municipality.)

CITY OF SAN FERNANDO
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LUGURAN TAYA ING SIYUDAD SAN FERNANDO

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

OPINION

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 4, 2003

email: feedback@inquirer.com.ph website: http://www.inq7.net

EUGENIA D. APOSTOL *Founding Chairman*

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Unnecessary exemptions

EDITORIAL

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo was widely praised when she ordered recently a ban on carrying firearms by civilians outside their homes. But the same people who praised her are now questioning the wisdom of a later order offering amnesty to owners of unlicensed guns. And the advocates of a gunless society the other day rapped the President for relaxing her directive and allowing certain exemptions.

There may be some merit in the amnesty offered to the owners of unlicensed firearms. Interior Secretary Jose Lina said there were at least 328,000 loose firearms in the country. Of this number, about 190,000 or more than half were previously licensed but their owners, for one reason or another, failed to renew their licenses. The amnesty should encourage the owners of the unlicensed firearms to make them legal. After the period of the amnesty the police can go after people who are still holding unlicensed firearms.

But the order relaxing the first directive is another matter. No exemption should have been granted. With a loophole now open, politicians and other influential people will seek exemptions. The exemptions could negate the effects of the recently imposed gun ban.

Empirical data have shown that a gun ban works for the good of the entire nation. A gun ban imposed by the Commission on Elections reduced the number of persons killed in elections to 77 in 1992. That's still 77 persons too many, but then, compare it with the death tolls in previous elections: 534 in 1971, 412 in 1980, 918 in 1984, 153 in 1986, 87 in 1987 and 149 in 1988.

The Comelec gun ban also reduced the crime rate during election periods. In 1992, for instance, the crime rate dropped by 20 percent—from the 50,000 crimes in 1991 to 40,000 in 1992. In 1998 the Comelec gun ban resulted in a reduction by 15 percent of the crime rate for the first quarter of the year compared to that of the same period in 1997.

The pro-gun advocates say that one problem is that police are sometimes the offenders themselves. But if this is so, then the solution is not to arm the civilians but to clean up the PNP and rid it of its criminal elements. You cannot fight fire with fire.

The President's gun ban order is one big step toward dismantling the culture of the gun in this country. Guns are a status symbol for Filipinos. They are also a symbol of machismo, power and influence. And as symbols go, they are not harmless but deadly. They can be used, with very fatal effects, at the slightest provocation.

The gun ban should be enforced strictly—and without any exemption except the usual ones issued to the police and military escorts of the President, Vice President, Senate President, Speaker of the House, the Chief Justice and associate justices of the Supreme Court and security personnel of the members of the diplomatic corps. Also exempted are officers and men of the police and military forces in active duty and in uniform and cashiers and disbursing officers. All other persons carrying firearms can then be presumed to be carrying them illegally and can be disarmed and arrested by uniformed law enforcers.

The Macapagal administration can take another step toward the dismantling of the gun culture by working for the return of the former, heavier penalty for illegal possession of firearms. The penalty was reduced largely for the benefit of actor Robin Padilla who was sentenced for illegal possession of firearms in 1995 so that he could leave prison after serving only three years of his 18-year sentence.

The gun ban is a step in the right direction but its effects may be diluted by the subsequent relaxation and the grant of exemptions. What the administration should do now is enforce the ban strictly and work for stiffer penalties for illegal possession of firearms.

A historic rarity

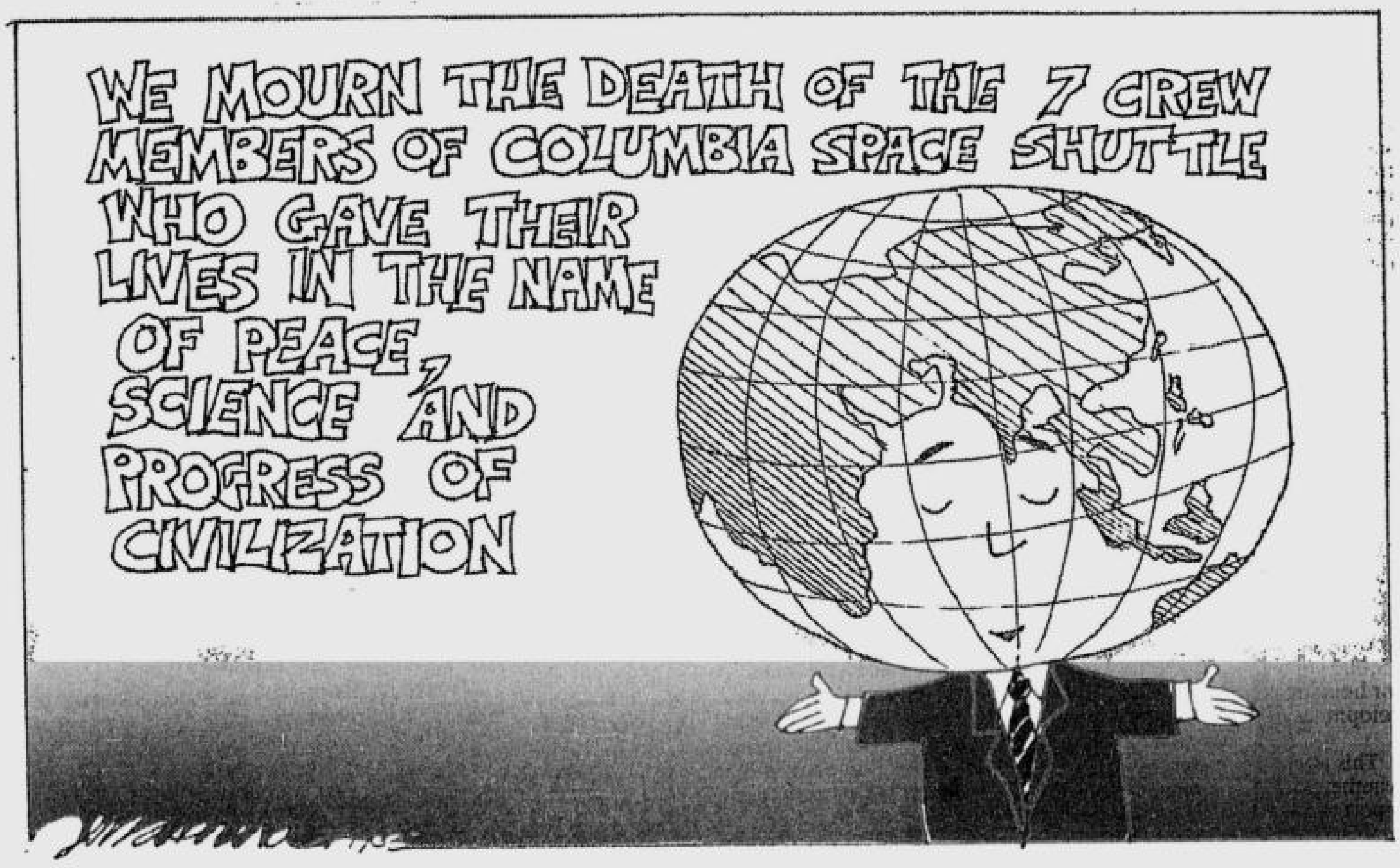
FOREIGN COMMENT

NO one in Czech politics today has the stature of Vaclav Havel and no one will ever get it. He is a historic rarity and should be remembered that way.

The problem is that it will be incredibly difficult to find a replacement, which the present situation confirms. Two of the favorites are Christian Democrat Petr Pithart, who is close to Havel, and the notably square and conservative Vaclav Klaus.

Whatever the Czech parliament decides, it will never be the same again. An era is over and the Czech Republic must get used to politicians of a more usual fare than the great poet, idealist and politician Vaclav Havel.

Politiken (Copenhagen, Denmark)


WE MOURN THE DEATH OF THE 7 CREW MEMBERS OF COLUMBIA SPACE SHUTTLE WHO GAVE THEIR LIVES IN THE NAME OF PEACE, SCIENCE AND PROGRESS OF CIVILIZATION

Gun ban, return-to-English policies hailed

AS I SEE IT

Neal H. Cruz

OF COURSE the pro-gun machos and gun importers and dealers will protest the ban on the carrying of firearms by civilians outside their homes. And of course privileged people will ask to be exempted from the ban. But what good is a ban if there are exemptions? Once you exempt one, others will ask for the same privilege. Once you exempt one group, say those who are allegedly under threat, others will claim they are also under threat, even if they are not, and will ask to be exempted, too. Before long, we would be back where we started, with guns everywhere and people getting killed right and left.

And wonder of wonders, why is the chief of the Philippine National Police, Director General Hermogenes Ebdane no less, speaking for the politicians, requesting the President to exempt them from the gun ban? Politicians feel naked without their bodyguards with their high-powered guns. They feel threatened all the time. Either they're paranoid or they're cowards. People who are afraid to die shouldn't enter politics. People who are afraid know they have sinned against some people. And there are no bigger sinners on this earth than politicians.

But don't the politicians realize that they would be safer with a strictly enforced total gun ban? They can't carry guns but their enemies can't either. So there won't be anybody with the capability to shoot them. But if they are exempted from the gun ban, so would their enemies. So the danger remains, even when they're armed. It may not be so bad if it is only their lives that are put at risk. But the lives of their bodyguards, as well as the welfare of the latter's families, are also put in jeopardy.

As for the argument of the pro-gun machos and gun dealers that the "responsible" gun owners with the licenses are being punished for the sins of holders of loose firearms, how many licensed gun holders have shot others over minor traffic altercations? You call them "responsible?" Rolito Go had a gun license, was he "responsible?" The motorcycling man who killed Llamas had a gun license, was he "responsible?" I bet all these guys now in prison, or about to be, for one irresponsible twitch of their trigger fingers, now regret ever owning a gun.

They didn't mean to kill the other guy; they only wanted to scare him. That's probably true, but when you draw a gun and the other guy isn't scared, you are forced to fire it or you lose face. And face, pride, status is the most important thing to most gun owners. They have this mistaken notion that a gun gives them status. That's why they fire their guns on New Year's Eve and kill some innocent people—not merely to make noise but to show their neighbors that they have guns.

As for the gun clubs, I don't see any sensible use for them except as a front to sell more guns. We have practically no game to hunt in the Philippines. In the gun clubs, members practice target shooting, fast draw and combat shooting. For what? Are they going to war? Are they going to be attacked? By whom?

There is a proliferation of guns in the United States, mostly licensed, and it also has the highest crime rate in the world because of the biggest gun club of them all, the National Rifle and Pistol Association, which lobbies against gun control legislation. Not surprisingly, the NRPA is supported by gun manufacturers. Its battlecry is "the right to bear arms" enshrined in the American Constitution, which is a throwback to the pioneering days and the War for Independence. As a result, more people are killed by guns in the United States than Americans killed in the Vietnam War.

On the other hand, countries with the strictest gun laws, such as Japan, Korea and China are the safest countries in the world.

"Guns don't kill. People do" is the favorite pro-gun slogan here. But people can't kill so easily without guns.

And why do we have gun shows in malls? They are obviously intended to sell more guns. It only promotes the gun culture. If we don't watch out, the whole Philippines will have the same gun culture as the Muslims have in Mindanao, where they love their guns more than their wives. Nandy Pacheco of Gunless Society wants the gun shows limited to military camps. I think they should be totally banned, too.

* * *

Of course there will be super-duper nationalists who will protest the President's order to return to English as medium of instruction in Philippine schools. But experience has shown that Filipino as medium of instruction, no matter how nationalistic that is, has resulted in poor graduates and teachers poor in English.

Proficiency in English used to be one of our advantages over other developing countries. We were the second or third biggest (in terms of population) English-speaking country in the world. Our literature used to be mainly in English. It used to be our advantage over workers from other countries. Tourists liked to come to the Philippines because almost everybody spoke English. Not anymore.

In contrast, other countries are learning English—even Malaysia, Thailand and Vietnam. In China, lessons in English are beamed by loudspeakers to villagers every morning while they work. In Japan, so many people are studying English and there is a shortage of teachers in English.

Breakthrough

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

(*Conclusion*)

I ASKED the Botong Pinoy people at the Ateneo de Naga where they got the idea for their system. They said they based it on existing models from all over the world, drawing out their best features and adapting them to local conditions. In particular to the kinds of cheating that happens here. Who knows? they said, if the system is successful here, they can export it to other countries, with modifications. Who says the Pinoy can't be world-class?

Botong Pinoy's advantages over the ballot box are patent. The ballot box allows cheating at every phase, from registration (flying voters) to voting (multiple voting, *dagdag-bawas*) to counting (substitutions, theft of ballot boxes). Even the recount invites cheating. I know a case where the losing candidate found a way to get to the archived votes a year after the elections and stuffed the boxes with fake votes. He shot up from third or fourth in the congressional race to first. Fortunately, the House Electoral Tribunal ruled against him, finding that degree of discrepancy unbelievable.

Botong Pinoy removes cheating at all those levels. You can't register twice, you can't vote twice, and you can't be counted twice or, as in the case of *dagdag-bawas*, more than twice or not at all. The recount clinches the argument: It's backed up by a barcoded hard copy. And it's fast. Very very fast.

The system is particularly ideal for the overseas vote, which is vulnerable to tampering. The computers can be set up in the Philippine embassies and other places to be designated by government and monitored by overseas workers' organizations, and allow the voters to vote within the day. Currently, there is a real danger of a mass of overseas workers being disenfranchised by the expected long queues at the embassies and the slowness of the prevailing system.

In fact, Botong Pinoy isn't just patently superior to the ballot box, it is patently superior to the method the Comelec has chosen to modernize voting with. That is the "Mark Sense system" that was tried out—unsuccessfully—in the ARMM elections. The system uses an optical sensor from IBM to detect information and is expensive and fairly unreliable. A comparison between the features of the Mark Sense and Botong Pinoy systems shows this: Mark Sense uses only expensive ballots the optical sensor can read (the process is made to adjust to the machine and not the other way around), it can only reduce *dagdag-bawas*, it can only determine the outcome of elections in five days, it cannot verify if the right vote is being tabulated. Botong Pinoy uses plain paper for printout, eliminates *dagdag-bawas*, can determine the results in a day, and has an ironclad way of verifying votes.

The initial response to Botong Pinoy has been enthusiastic, particularly from the Filipino community in the United States, which has volunteered to donate computers for it. Botong Pinoy has already gotten a pledge for more than 200,000 computers from them. All that's needed is to replace the screens with touch screens, which is worlds cheaper than the Mark Sense system.

There is a complication here: Namfrel is ferociously lobbying for Mark Sense, since its top honchos have a business interest in it. To a point where RA 8436, the election modernization law, has been worded in a way that commits the Comelec to it for a couple of presidential elections. The system, which is now regarded as obsolete, can be changed only in 2116. That is intolerable.

I asked: Can Botong Pinoy be hacked? No, they said, it is a stand-alone system, there are no backdoors hackers can sneak through. I asked again: Can the system be tampered with at the polling places so that the wrong votes are sent to the central office? No, they said, only the right person can vote, and he or she can't vote more than once. Once he does, the vote is transmitted instantly. I asked still again: Can the votes be tampered with at the central office? No, they said, the votes will be sent not just to Comelec but to other accredited poll bodies, including those to be put up by NGOs. Any effort by a group to rig the results will show.

It's an impressive system, as I've said. Short of anyone demonstrating exactly how it can be infiltrated or subverted, I'm willing to push for it heart and soul.

I've only one caveat, which is the need to educate or familiarize people with the technology. It doesn't take much imagination to see there's work to be done there. You see it every day while queuing before an ATM: someone absolutely petrified while dealing with the machine, especially with people in the queue registering their impatience with audible noises. The petrified are not *masa*, they are middle class, even rich people. For Botong Pinoy to work, it has to orient the public in the technology, through TV and actual demonstrations. But this is not a formidable barrier. We have ample time before next year's elections.

Which brings me to the need for all of us to rally behind the effort. The only people I can imagine who would not want it are those who are determined to cheat because it is the only way they can win. Which include the *trapos* in Congress and the Senate. The other group is the one that's pushing for the obsolete to modernize the primitive. That is to say, Joe Concepcion and company. But they can always be persuaded to see the light, by the same method they've always extolled for ending tyranny, which is people power.

I asked Fr. Joel Tabora, Ateneo de Naga president, how he would take it if the resistance from the recidivist elements proves enormous, and the proposal is blocked. He answered fervently: "If that happens, we'll take to the streets."

Well, if it happens, I'll be there with him.

'Appeal to solons' 'sense of statesmanship'

POLITICAL TIDBITS

Belinda Olivares-Cunanan

SPEAKER Jose de Venecia is resting over the next two days after his chest pains, ascribed by his doctors to arthritis of the bones. When I called him up to wish him well he didn't sound like his usual ebullient self, but he was excited enough to tell me about the $150-million concessional financing granted by the Chinese government to provide relocation housing for some 75,000 squatter families along the railroad tracks. He received the assurance during his recent trip to Beijing. JDV said President Macapagal-Arroyo is very happy, for this project, which promises to be the largest urban resettlement program of the country ever, jibes with her plan over the next 15 months to undertake mass housing. It's one of the pillars of her reform program.

* * *

Under the project, which commences this year, the government will rehabilitate the north railway from Manila through Clark and Pangasinan to San Fernando, La Union, as well as the south railway from Calamba to Legazpi City. From there the plan is to extend the railway up to Matnog by cutting through the Sorsogon mountains. JDV explained that the Manila-Calamba commuter railway will be rehabilitated by a Korean government loan of $100 million. Talks of financing by European governments of the railway system in Panay and Northwestern Mindanao are also underway. A major stumbling block to the rehabilitation of the Luzon railway is the welfare of the 75,000 squatter families, but the Chinese loan for housing should take care of that. Great development.

* * *

This afternoon the House will vote in plenary whether to accept or reject the justice committee report throwing out the impeachment complaint against Comelec Commissioner Luzviminda Tancangco filed by 23 individuals and 242 people's organizations. Tancangco is charged with "inefficiency and gross inexcusable negligence, betrayal of public trust and culpable violation of the Constitution." Her case has gained so much prominence and this afternoon's marathon nominal voting will be covered live by radio and television. If two-thirds of the House members vote to endorse the report, then the impeachment complaint will not prosper, but if at least 73 members vote to reject it, then it goes back to the committee for investigation.

* * *

Many citizens want that investigation opened as they feel the committee, headed by Rep. Marcelo Libanan, did not do justice to the 80-page complaint, which was supported by 200 pages of evidence culled from COA reports, Comelec records and the Supreme Court decision voiding the P6.5-billion contract for voters' registration that Tancangco entered into with Photokina. Thrty-six members of the committee voted to junk the complaint by invoking "individual discretion." Whether 73 members will vote to reject the report remains to be seen, for very powerful groups support Tancangco.

* * *

The lawmakers have to realize, however, that the credibility of the House is at stake here. The issue goes beyond the fate of Tancangco. If House members love the institution they belong to, they should protect its reputation by guarding its credibility like a sacred but fragile vessel. Luckily when a small group of House members tried to stop the extradition of Mark Jimenez, the rest didn't join in the insanity and allowed the law to take its course. But this case against Tancangco could damage the House if it would be perceived to be covering up for her. Let the investigation be done so that the truth will set everyone free, perhaps most of all Tancangco, who had admitted in other forums that she had acted in "good faith." An investigation will give her a chance to defend herself.

* * *

Some lawmakers try to muddle the issue by portraying the impeachment case as a grudge fight between Namfrel chair Joe Concepcion and Tancangco, claiming it was filed because Tancangco thwarted the deal to supply counting machines that JoeCon was lobbying for. They also accuse the "perfumed set" of supporting the impeachment only because of friendship with JoeCon. Nothing is farther from the truth. Concepcion is only one of the 23 individual signatories while Namfrel is only one of over 200 organizations endorsing the complaint. Many of these signatories, including those in the "perfumed set," are outstanding professionals who cannot be conned into signing anything they are not convinced about. They have no agenda other than genuine concern for the country and clean honest elections through modernization, and they regard Tancangco, for good reasons, as a major obstruction to clean elections.

* * *

Some Tancangco supporters protest JoeCon's "meddling," but why don't they protest the meddling of Iglesia ni Kristo? The INK is supposed to be a religious sect, but it has been flexing its muscle in various political issues, and the House is abuzz with reports of INK pressure to support Tancangco. Such pressures are powerful, for INK support can make a difference in elections. The INK's obsession with political power is understandable, but must it be always on the wrong side of history, backing people charged with corruption? Isn't this contrary to the teachings of Christ?

Speaker Jose de Venecia was said to have told a caucus last week that there should be a "conscience vote," i.e., it should be a matter between the House member and his conscience. At this point, it is timely to remind the lawmakers of the admonition of former Chief Justice Roberto Concepcion quoted in the justice committee report: "In the ultimate analysis a case of impeachment is addressed to the sense of justice and statesmanship of every member of Congress."

A sign from heaven

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

I'M sorry to say that I felt the same way as Vice President Tito Guingona in the wake of the Columbia space shuttle tragedy. Thoughts rushed through my mind in a jumble as we beheld CNN footage of the Columbia breaking up in a trail of wispy white smoke, but the most striking was, "This is a bad omen." Later, I would tell the family that I felt the tragedy was a "sign from God," a way for the heavens to warn US President George W. Bush against starting a war against Iraq.

Of course, one thing has nothing to do with the other, not if we follow the straight-arrow logic of the rational Western mind. But we're talking feeling here, and amid the seemingly inexorable march toward conflict, one which poor countries like ours have nothing to do with but are already being drawn into, the sight of the ultimate symbol of American technological might crashing down from the sky resonated with meaning. Might is not always right, after all. And perhaps the tragedy is enough of a shocker to call a halt to the Americans' mad rush to war.

At the height of international anticipation before the first manned spaceship landed on the moon, I remember reading a letter to the editor titled "No, Mr. Nixon, we are not impressed." Signed by a group of faculty members of the University of the Philippines, the letter rejected notions of how the Apollo mission demonstrated clear technological supremacy for the United States, which was then engaged in a fevered "race to space" against the Soviets. It so happened that at the time, the United States was still trying to extricate itself from the mess of the Vietnam War, which had boiled over to Cambodia and Laos. Putting a peaceful end to this conflict, said the professors, was far more important and valuable to humankind than any achievement in outer space.

Nixon himself, of course, would be remembered not for presiding over the United States at the time of its greatest space victory, but for going down in ignominy, the first American president ever to have to resign from office.

* * *

IN TIME, the American space program would be downscaled, from dreams of colonizing space and nearby planets, to something like a commuter service to the Russian-managed Mir space station. This after a series of fatal accidents and major budget cuts forced Nasa to retool the program toward humbler objectives. From conquest, to research; from triumphalism to cooperation, even with the former Cold War competitor.

But even with a vastly downscaled program, Nasa soon began sending space shuttle missions with such regularity they ceased to become news. Sadly, America and the world seem to remember the space shuttle only when tragedy strikes. As it did in 1986 with the Challenger, and now with the Columbia.

That the space shuttle flights soon fell into routine detracts not one bit from the feats of technological and engineering daring that made them possible. But could it also be possible that it is this hubris arising from its technological edge that gives the United States the temerity to act, as Raul Manglapus once put it, as the world's Supercop?

Our hearts go out to the families of the seven astronauts who died, and to the American people. But with the world being dragged into the brink of war, my hope is that American leaders will see more into the tragedy than just a glitch in an awesome system, or an "acceptable risk" inherent in what has always been a daunting challenge. Could the heavens be telling them something?

* * *

WHAT remains the most vivid Columbia image for me, apart from the sight of that ghostly white streak outlined against a bright blue sky, is the photo of the seven astronauts in their "pumpkin suits," the bright orange puffy suits that carried all their needs and kept them linked to monitors back on earth.

The seven were, as wire service reports said, the very picture of America, in all its diversity and variety. Five men, two women; an African-American, a woman born in India who opted for American citizenship, and an Israeli war hero who became the first of his countrymen in outer space.

Two even carried reminders of home. Kalpana Chawla, reports CNN, asked for her old college's banner to bring with her to space. Ilan Ramon carried out an "assignment" from Israeli high school students who asked him to perform an experiment on crystal formation in space.

Unlike in 1986, when the death of Christa MacAuliffe, a schoolteacher who won a contest to be the first teacher in space, raised questions about the propriety of allowing civilians and even a woman aboard the space shuttle, no one has questioned whether any of the seven should have been on that mission. It seems clear each one of them wanted to be on board the Columbia, trained hard for it for years, and knew full well the risks involved with flying to space and back.

Their courage and determination, it seems to me, is far more impressive than any amount of technological dazzle and flash. If the Columbia had not broken up mid-air during its return, the world would not have much cared about what happened during one more "routine" mission. But it mattered a lot to the seven, so much so that they gave up their lives for it.

* * *

CALLING all graduates of Our Lady of Grace Academy, Caloocan City (now known as St. Mary's Academy, Caloocan City). There will be a Grand Alumni Homecoming this Saturday, Feb. 8 at the SMACC school grounds. Registration starts at 4 p.m. Hosting the affair is Class '78 as silver jubilarians. For ticket reservations, please contact Sally de Guzman (365-8167) or Jean Barba-Mostrales (334-2841).

More sage advice

SENSE AND SENSIBILITY

Bambi L. Harper

EVERY now and then I receive e-mail that helps make life easier or offers suggestions that help you in certain situations. Some of them would have been useful when I inadvertently left my wallet in the counter of a department store and had absolutely no record of credit card numbers, driver's license, insurance card, etc. and there was no way of obtaining the information until several hours later. Luckily the wallet was returned with the contents intact, including the money.

* * *

"The next time you order checks, have only your initials (instead of first name) and last name put on them. If someone takes your check book, they will not know if you sign your checks with just your initials or your first name but your bank will know how you sign your checks.

"Put your office phone number on your checks instead of your home phone. If you have a PO box, use that instead of your home address. If you do not have a PO box, use your work address.

"Never have your SSS number printed on your checks. You can add it if it is necessary, but have it printed and anyone can get it.

"Place the contents of your wallet on a photocopy machine, do both sides of each license, credit card, etc. You will know what you had in your wallet and all of the account numbers and phone numbers to call and cancel. Keep the photocopy in a safe place."

* * *

A corporate attorney sent this out to the employees in his company:

"We've all heard horror stories about fraud that's committed using a stolen name and address, Social Security number, credit cards, etc. Unfortunately I, an attorney, have firsthand knowledge because my wallet was stolen last month. Within a week, the thieve(s) ordered an expensive monthly cell phone package, applied for a VISA credit card, had a credit line approved to buy a Gateway computer, received a PIN number from DMV (Department of Motor Vehicles) to change my driving record information online, and more.

"But here's some critical information to limit the damage in case this happens to you or someone you know: You have been told to cancel your credit cards immediately. But the key is having the toll free numbers and your card numbers handy so you know whom to call. Keep them where you can find them easily.

"File a police report immediately in the jurisdiction where it was stolen. This proves to credit providers you were diligent, and is a first step toward an investigation.

"But here's what is perhaps most important (*I never ever thought of doing this—BLH):* Call the three national credit reporting organizations (*Is there such a thing here in RP?*) immediately to place a fraud alert on your name and Social Security number. I had never heard of doing this until advised by a bank that called to tell me an application for credit was made over the Internet in my name.

"The alert means any company that checks your credit knows your information was stolen and they have to contact you by phone to authorize new credit. By the time I was advised to do this, almost two weeks after the theft, all the damage had been done. There are records of all the credit checks initiated by the thieves' purchases, none of which I knew about before placing the alert. Since then, no additional damage has been done, and the thieves threw my wallet away this weekend (someone turned it in). It seems to have stopped them in their tracks."

* * *

Money, a commodity that is replaceable, is what the first part of the advice concentrates on. The second part is not redeemable and once lost cannot be retrieved. Imagine. . . .

"There is a bank that credits your account each morning with $86,400. It carries over no balance from day to day. Every evening it deletes whatever part of the balance you failed to use during the day. What would you do? Draw out ALL OF IT, of course!

"Each of us has such a bank. Its name is TIME. Every morning, it credits you with 86,400 seconds. Every night it writes off as lost, whatever of this you have failed to invest to good purpose. It carries over no balance. It allows no overdraft.

"Each day it opens a new account for you. Each night it burns the remains of the day. If you failed to use the day's deposits, the loss is yours. There is no going back. There is no drawing against the 'tomorrow.' You must live in the present on today's deposits. Invest it so as to get from it the utmost in health, happiness and success! The clock is running. Make the most of today.

"To realize the value of one year, ask a student who failed a grade.

"To realize the value of one month, ask a mother who gave birth to a premature baby.

"To realize the value of one week, ask the editor of a weekly newspaper.

"To realize the value of one hour, ask the lovers who are waiting to meet.

"To realize the value of one minute, ask a person who missed the train.

"To realize the value of one second, ask a person who just avoided an accident.

"To realize the value of one millisecond, ask the person who won a silver medal in the Olympics.

"Treasure every moment that you have! And treasure it more because you share it with someone special, someone special enough to spend your time with.

"And remember: Time waits for no one. In life there are no rehearsals."

Philosophy, anyone?

IS PHILOSOPHY really out of date nowadays? I can't help but ask the question. Many of my peers regard it as too deep, too serious, even out-of-this-world. I can't say I blame them. I myself had the same thoughts before I began to explore it.

YOUNG BLOOD

MaryRose A. Cobarde

We want to know what the young are thinking about. What are their thoughts on current issues? We welcome contributions from the twentysomething and below.—Ed.

When I was in first year college, I had a hard time telling anyone who inquired that I was taking philosophy as my course. It always bothered me when they asked, "What are you going to do after that?" I couldn't say, "Be a philosopher" like it were some kind of a profession in this day and age. So I started out feeling like taking up philosophy went beyond the bounds of practicality.

But like I said, that was before I explored it. After months of studies, I found that philosophy simply deals with what man wonders about. In earlier times, the people who tried to find answers to the big questions men asked did not have books that told them what the world was about. They were the first philosophers. They labored to figure things out and as a result a whole field of knowledge and study was opened.

Philosophy's concern is far-reaching. It penetrates all experiences, from the mundane to the divine.

Some people complain in that its methods just complicate things. I'm sure this accounts for its lack of popularity—this and the observation that "philosophy bakes no bread."

I am not saying that these are entirely false. But to answer the first complaint, before simple ideas can be grasped more often than not the difficult and complex ones have first to be explained.

As to the alleged impracticality of philosophy, sure it doesn't pay in money terms. I mean, you won't find an ad that says: "Wanted: philosopher." But philosophy is useful not necessarily in finding a living but in living an enlightened life.

A lot of people may not be aware of it, but they do ask philosophical questions. At some point, each one of us must have wondered why we can't live forever, or why things change, or how the world came to be, unless we have become contented and happy with the designs of history and science.

The world causes a lot of wonder because no matter how much we try, everything can never be explained—even by ideas. Socrates put it so simply: "One thing only I know and that is that I know nothing."

If we take this to heart, we can develop a healthy curiosity and wonder about our world. I do not suggest that everyone make a lifetime of study of the thoughts of Plato or Aristotle, but that we live consciously, that we think and ask questions and that we keep the wonder. We can be doctors, artists, teachers or farmers and still keep the spirit of philosophy burning.

Is philosophy out of date? Certainly not. It will be around for as long as we think and wonder, for as long as we live.

MaryRose A. Cobarde, 24, teaches English while pursuing her master's in philosophy at the University of San Carlos in Cebu City.

Countdown

Earl Tongol

I WENT to school one day 30 minutes before our first class to find my classmates seated in a small circle and discussing something very important. They looked more serious than they had ever been before.

I listened to the discussion. One of my classmates asked, "What course will you take?"

At first I was astonished. It seemed to be too early to be planning for college. Shouldn't we be thinking instead of how we were going to pass third year high school with flying colors? The things I had in my mind were my periodical tests, the prom, my responsibilities, and college was definitely not one of them. But then when you saw the high school seniors carrying loads of books and reviewers, you begin to realize that you didn't have too many days left before the end of the world.

Once in July I asked a senior what her plans were. She told me she was very excited about entering college. She felt she was ready to handle the entrance tests because she had attended review classes thrice a week during summer vacation. Since then, I have been bothered by the "restless" summer after the junior year. I am worried that I may not have time to get a suntan out on the beach in April because I have to prepare for the entrance tests.

In August, we were given a brochure, titled "College guide." This freaked me out some more.

Several days later, the dates of the college entrance tests in various colleges and universities were posted. And it made me nervous to realize that if I still had another year to go before I entered college, I would be taking those tests in a year's time.

The college "thing" temporarily left my mind during the Christmas break. My mind was occupied with projects, quarterly test preparation and having fun.

I began to feel troubled again almost as soon as classes resumed. I was reminded of college when our principal announced the names of students who had passed the college entrance examinations in different colleges and universities. "Will I make it when my time comes?" I kept asking myself.

Most juniors think about love, entertainment, the latest fashions, the popular MTV and the dress they will wear to the prom. Third year high school should also be a time to reminisce over the past two years of high school life and look at some old pictures especially of former classmates. A junior should also use the year to prove something before he becomes too busy.

I can tell that the seniors carry the heaviest burden among high school students. They have little time left to show what they can do and that is why they have to hurry. More importantly, they really have to study hard lest they fail.

Much as I would like to avoid it now, choosing the right course is a big problem. Friends tell me to follow my heart. But what will I follow since my heart is divided over several choices? I am still quite lucky I have a few months before making the final decision that could determine my whole future. I may not want to decide now, but soon I will have to. If ants prepare for the rainy days now, then I must prepare for college while I still have time.

I still have my senior year to complete. But the countdown has begun.

Earl Tongol, 15, is a junior at San Lorenzo Ruiz Center of Studies and Schools in San Fernando, Pampanga

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LETTERS

Poverty has roots in overpopulation

SOME quarters in our society assert that over-population does not contribute to the poverty of the nation. We beg to disagree.

Definitely, our country's misery is linked to the galloping growth rate of our population. A poor Filipino couple with two children would be poorer if they had five to house, clothe and feed. It is as plain as that.

By reason of population growth, free land becomes less available and agricultural produce decreases in relation to population.

The projection of the Philippine Population Commission is that our land areas can accommodate a maximum of 100 million people. With our current growth rate of 2.4 percent, such a maximum will be reached by year 2013.

It is imperative for the government to embark on a massive educational campaign on the advantages of family planning and the disadvantages of too many children.

The common attitude of Filipino couples, particularly in the provinces, is that they can feed and educate even 10 children. Unfortunately, the national problem of overpopulation is not their concern.

The logical conclusion is: If we are to wait for Filipino families to unite in seeing from a national perspective the effects of an uncontrolled population growth and the poverty and misery it brings upon the entire nation, the wait would be very long.

It is the contention of some that a bigger population would have a salutary effect on the nation. "More people means a greater labor force. More people would mean a greater number of producers."

What they are forgetting, however, is that in the first 18 years of a man's life, he is mainly a consumer. During that the time he does not produce and therefore he has no purchasing power. Then by the time he reaches the age when he ought to be a producer, he is confronted by the reality that there is not enough jobs even for willing hands. Thus, the government's hope for the development of an internal market for local goods turns out to be illusory. What is actually realized is a mass of disappointed, unemployed indigents and squatters bereft of purchasing power.

Hence, we will continue to flounder and sink deeper and deeper into destitution. Poor as we are now, our country will soon be among the poorest of the poor on this planet.

—**MARCIAL R. PIMENTEL,**
Camarines Norte

Is there no end to rallies?

WHAT can you expect when a politician got to the highest political post in the country via a big rally at Edsa?

Every time somebody wants to press for something, he rallies. When the employees of Department of Education wanted their department head removed, they rallied. When the employees of Social Security System didn't agree with the reforms proposed by their head, they rallied. When students pressed for reforms, they rallied. When tricycle drivers opposed the Clean Air Act, they rallied. When vendors insist on selling their wares on the street, they rally. And now that actors and professionals don't want to pay VAT, they have held a rally.

It seems all sectors of society take their grievances to the streets. Small wonder the Philippines is being left far behind by its neighbors.

Maybe it's time we removed a bit of our beloved democratic exercise which has been much abused. Or I would not be surprised if one day a wife who petition for annulment of her marriage has been denied will take to the street and rally.

—**SALOME TANTE FLORES,**
Asian Mansion II,
Perea Street, Makati City

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A city in the sky

PINOY KASI

Michael L. Tan

"YOU'RE crazy," one of my friends told me when I said I was driving up to Baguio on a Thursday and returning on a Friday.

I didn't really have a choice. I'd agreed, weeks before, to give a talk at the annual convention of the Philippine Psychiatrists' Association, but also wanted to be back for a full day of classes on Saturday.

The trip went off well and I thought I should share on what you can do with such blitzkrieg trips.

The trip up took about 7 hours, including a leisurely lunch and one unintended detour. The talk went well, with the usual banter after the session, catching up with friends. It was a good day, capped with a night out. Baguio has good restaurants (try Salud restaurant for home-cooked fine dining) and a wide range of entertainment from live rock bands to jazz and folk music.

The next morning was market day: the Good Shepherd convent for jams, Strawberry Farm in Trinidad for more than strawberries (they have crafts nearby as well), and then the City Market, which has just about everything you'd want to get.

The market is a paradise for vegetarians with carrots, broccoli, kintsay flowers, coriander, snowpeas, mushrooms, yes, stuff that our supermarkets insist on importing from Australia but at much lower prices.

Not far from the vegetable vendors you'll find the rice dealers. Ask for upland rice. They're much more expensive than regular rice varieties but once you've tried them you'll understand what "real" rice is, fragrant and filling. There's *Bordagol*, a mountain rice variety at P25 a kilo and red rice, *Kintoman*, at P55 a kilo. A purple glutinous variety, *Balitinaw*, also at P55 a kilo, is best mixed in with your regular rice since it is quite filling.

Walk on a bit and you get to the flower shops: statis flowers, which stay "fresh" for months, at P20 a bunch (P15 with some bargaining), roses, daisies, mums, white lilies (P20 a dozen).

The market has lots of other stuff, from imitations of Good Shepherd jams to Ilokano blankets, naughty keychains and the man in the barrel. Two hours should be more than enough to do the groceries and pick up the other *pasalubong*. Then you can hop over to the City Hall area for lunch.

There are a number of restaurants there but I'm always partial to Café by the Ruins because they have sumptuous vegetarian meals. Don't forget that at the Café, you can also take away cookies and fish roe pâté and *tapuy* (rice wine). If you're in a rush, you should now head back to Manila. If you have a few more hours, you can go around the city to take in more sights or do more shopping. Around Leonard Wood, there's good handmade paper at a shop near the Pink Sisters convent and the best carrot cake in Baguio at Tepeyac Hotel.

The beauty of Baguio is that you can do a lot in a day, or stretch out your activities over a week, or a month (which usually means venturing further north to Bontoc, Sagada, Ifugao). Baguio has come a long way, rebuilding from the devastating earthquake in 1990. This entire month of February they'll be busy with their "Panagbenga" flower festival, culminating during the last weekend. Grab a copy of Ronnie Alejandro's book, Baguio: City of Flowers and check www.panagbenga.com now if you want the schedule of activities as well as information on accommodations.

Baguio's residents have really worked hard to restore their city. There is, unfortunately, one major problem that can really discourage people from going up and these are the horrendous traffic jams along the way.

The traffic situation is so crucial it determines how much time you can spend in Baguio. If you're on a day trip I advise leaving Baguio right after lunch; otherwise, you drive right into terrible gridlocks around Tarlac and Pampanga, the worst one being in Mabalacat, in the last two-kilometer stretch before the north expressway. The traffic isn't due so much to the vehicular volume than to the lack of traffic enforcement, with flea-brained drivers who create counterflows, or try to create a third, fourth, fifth lane in a two-lane road. Accidents happen frequently, which means more gridlocks.

The ordeal doesn't end when you get into the north expressway. If you're there after 8 p.m. you end up competing with homicidal truck and bus drivers who convert the narrow two-lane highway into a drag racing strip.

Baguio has always been special for our family. My mother lived there intermittently in her youth and during World War II. On my part, I remember childhood summers when my maternal stepgrandmother would take up all her grandchildren to spend the summer there.

Our parents, who had their work in Manila, would join us for weekends and my father remembers it was actually easier and faster to drive to Baguio in those days. He says this with sadness because he now feels he and my mother can't make the trip anymore, given the travel time and safety issues.

I get similar reactions from visitors from overseas who want to go and visit, but back out when they hear how long it takes—my trip down took almost 9 hours because of the traffic. It's a shame Baguio loses so many potential visitors, even investors, because we can't get our act together with roads and simple traffic enforcement. It's not just Baguio that loses but the towns along the way because they benefit, too, when visitors stop to eat or to shop.

I do want to end on a happy note. I have to say the conditions on Kennon Road and Marcos highway (minus the Marcos bust) have improved tremendously, each with its own flavor. Kennon's narrower but you get a more rustic feel and see more people. Marcos highway's wide and gives you an almost exhilirating panoramic feel, but has a certain empty feeling because you don't see people too often.

But that's Baguio for you, a city in the sky, cosmopolitan yet rustic, full of mystery and variety.

STATEMENT OF CONCERN

We, the Delegates to the **Citizens' Caucus** held at Sulo Hotel, Quezon City, on 28 January 2003, mindful of our duties as citizens, and after a wide-ranging inquiry into the present state of the nation, do hereby submit the following list of serious concerns for the immediate consideration and appropriate action by our fellow citizens and the government of the Republic of the Philippines:

1. The people's trust in government has been eroded beyond measure by persistent questions concerning the legitimacy of the administration, and pervasive corruption at all levels and in all branches of government;
2. The public debt is growing faster than the economy, public service is virtually invisible, and the government is unable to stop smuggling and to collect taxes;
3. Insurgency remains a serious threat to the security of the state, terrorism is a growing concern, and recent assassinations could lead to a new cycle of violence;
4. Certain sectors of the media have become part of the problem because of their low level of professionalism, their lack of self-policing policies and mechanisms, and their inclination to engage in partisan politics;
5. The educational system is not serving the Filipino youth as well as it should, and there is need to develop and support alternative systems of learning to serve the greater masses of the youth;
6. The electoral system has been so thoroughly corrupted that despite the government's decision to computerize, there is no possibility of holding clean and honest elections in 2004 or thereafter, unless there is first a total cleanup of the system, beginning with a purging of the list of registered voters;
7. The rule of law has been shattered, and must be restored by all means at the disposal of constitutionally faithful citizens, regardless of consequences.

We also agreed that the **Citizens' Caucus** be formally adopted as a continuing process and forum to examine all relevant issues, towards the framing and implementation of a **Citizens' Agenda**. Towards this end, we agreed to encourage fellow citizens to replicate the process in their respective areas in order to facilitate the completion of such an **Agenda**.

Francisco S. Tatad
Convenor
Sen. Gregorio B. Honasan
Featured Guest

Lt. Gen. Jaime de los Santos (Ret.), Prof. Felipe Medalla, Prof. Alan Paguia, Fr. Roger Alarcon, OP, Ed Bullecer, Datu Norodin Alonto Lucman, Horacio Morales Jr., Edicio de la Torre, Salvador Escudero, Prof. Zeus Salazar, Prof. Benito Lim, Dean Roman Dannug, Prof. Evangeline Quinto, Prof. Zosima Aguilar, Victor Macalincag, Antonio Gatmaitan, Rodolfo Dula, Herman Tiu Laurel, Mario Rivera, Zenaida Seva, Benjamin Afuang, DY Caparas, Zaida Sonsona, Rogelio Asuncion, Larry Cruz

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ISANG PANAWAGAN SA ATING MGA SENADOR AT KONGRESISTA PARA SA MABILISANG PAGPAPATIBAY NG AMYENDA SA ANTI-MONEY LAUNDERING ACT

Kami, ang mga lehitimong kinatawan ng mga samahan ng mga Overseas Filipino Workers (OFWs), sampu ng aming mga pamilya at kamag-anak ay humihiling ng suporta sa mga Kagalang-galang na Mambabatas, kapwa ng Mataas at Mababang sangay ng Kongreso ng Pilipinas, para sa mabilisang pagpapasá ng mga Amyenda sa Anti-Money Laundering Act of 2001.

Ang mga amyendang ito ay ihaharap sa malawakang diskusyon sa House of Representatives. Ito ay nakasalang na rin upang ipasá sa Senado.

Nakarating sa aming kaalaman na **kung hindi maipagtitibay ang mga amyendang ito bago mag-Pebrero 12, 2003, lubhang maaapektuhan ang pagpapadala ng aming pinaghirapang remittances sa aming mga mahal sa buhay dito sa Pilipinas.**

Ito ay bunga ng mga ipapataw na kaukulang sanction o penalty ng mga bansang kasapi sa Financial Action Task Force o FATF. Ang FATF ay isang pandaigdigang samahan ng mga bansang tumutugis sa mga nagsasagawa ng money laundering.

Kapag na-blacklist ang isang bansa, mahihirapang magsagawa ng mga transaksyong pinansyal ang mga mamamayan nito kapag sila'y nasa ibang bansa.

Kabilang sa mga transaksyong maaapektuhan ng blacklisting ay ang pagpapadala ng mga remittances naming mga migranteng manggagawa. Isasailalim sa mahigpit na proseso at requirements ang transaksyong ito na magdudulot ng aberya at pagkaantala, kumpara sa dali ng proseso kapag tayo'y alinsunod sa tuntunin ng FATF.

Mahirap po ang maghanap-buhay sa ibayong dagat. Ang pagod, lungkot at pangungulila ay ilan lamang sa mga sakripisyong aming pinapangibabawan para sa pangarap na mas magandang kinabukasan para sa aming mga mahal sa buhay. Isinasadibdib din namin ang aming tungkuling makapag-ambag sa ating ekonomiya.

Mauunawaan po ninyo marahil na ang produktong ito ng aming pagsisikap ay inaasam naming mabilis at maayos nilang matatanggap. Bukod dito, **matinding pinsala ang magiging epekto sa ekonomiya sa mabagal na pagpasok ng mga remittances.**

Nakasalalay po sa inyong mga kamay ang kagyat na kinabukasan ng aming mga umaasang pamilya. Huwag po sana ninyo kaming bibiguin!

Umaasa kami na muli ninyong patutunayan ang inyong lubos na pagmamalasakit sa kapakanan naming binabansagang "Bagong Bayani."

Maraming salamat po at mabuhay kayo!

NATIONAL NETWORK OF OFWs and OFW FAMILIES

DWIGHT PENSON
Migrant NGO Forum

ENGR. NOEL JOSUE
KAIBIGAN ng OCWs

FE MANLANGIT
United Seamen's Wives Welfare Association of the Philippines, Inc. (USWWAPI)

CARMEN PEDROSA
Confederation of Filipino Overseas Organizations

LEO FUBIANO, JR.
Construction Workers Solidarity, Inc. (CWS)

ENGR. NELSON RAMIREZ
United Filipino Seafarers (UFS)

MELLY PAGUNSAN
Seamen's Wives Association of the Philippines, Inc. (SWAPI)

Perla S. Vega
PERLA S. VEGA
Movement to Help Eradicate Rape & Other Female Abuses (MOTHER)

ROBERT CERALVO
Coalition of Global Filipinos

ROSARIO CAÑETE
Unlad Kabayan

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ME ANN P. GONZALES
Migrante-Anak-Pamilya Foundation

EDMUND RUGA
Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines-Episcopal Commission for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Itinerant People (CBCP-ECMI)

ROSANNA LUZ VALERIO
Balikabayani Foundation

CATHY LEDESMA
OFWNet Foundation, Inc.

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ATIKHA Overseas Workers and Communities Initiative, Inc.

Atty Pearl Garganera-Gauzon
ATTY. PEARL GARGANERA GAUZON
Association of Ilonggos of Metropolitan Washington, D.C., Inc.

MA. PAZ FRANCISCO
SAPI-OFW Group Philippines

FR. HARRY ANG
Seafarers Mission Center, Inc.

For:
RENATO MABUNGA
Center for Migrant Advocacy Philippines, Inc

CORAZON ALMA DE LEON
International Social Service Philippines

ROGER CORDERO
Merchant Marines Overseas Association (MMOA)

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ABS LANGKUNO
Federation of Mindanao Overseas Contract Workers (FEDMOCW)

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MILTON UNSO
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Construction Workers Solidarity, Inc. (CWS)

CES F. TRIBULETE
KAIBIGAN ng OCWs

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The WORLD

Editor **Luverne B. Gueco**

Iraq: Powell out to fabricate evidence

BAGHDAD—Iraq claims US Secretary of State Colin Powell will fabricate evidence against Saddam Hussein's regime when he appears before the UN Security Council this week to try to prove the Iraqis are hiding banned weapons.

Maj. Gen. Hossam Mohamed Amin, Iraq's chief liaison to UN weapons inspectors, told reporters Sunday that Powell's material would likely be "fabricated space photos or aerial photos," of a kind the Iraqis could refute if given a chance to study it.

"It is a political game," Amin said of Powell's appearance, set for Wednesday.

In a front-page editorial Monday, Baghdad's ruling party newspaper, Al-Thawra, called on Security Council members "to prove their credibility . . . to confront with courage those fabricated American lies."

Amin insisted Baghdad was "keen to resolve any pending issues" in the UN search for banned weapons, though he didn't immediately offer new concessions on unresolved issues.

Nonetheless, Amin insisted Baghdad was "keen to resolve any pending issues" in the UN search for banned weapons, though he didn't immediately offer new concessions on unresolved issues.

Saddam himself is expected to offer his own assessment on the US-Iraqi confrontation in a television interview with leftwing former British lawmaker and anti-war activist Tony Benn. The interview was taped Sunday and will be broadcast in the next day or two, Benn said.

Iraq has steadfastly denied it has weapons of mass destruction, but it is under pressure to make concessions and show progress in the UN inspections process in hopes of blocking any US-British diplomatic bid for military action to topple Saddam.

UN resolutions passed since Iraq's defeat by a US-led coalition in the 1991 Gulf War prohibit nuclear, chemical and biological weapons programs in Iraq. Thousands of such weapons were destroyed under a UN inspection program in the 1990s. The United States and Britain insist Saddam is still hiding banned weaponry and say they will disarm Iraq by force—if necessary.

The United States has deployed almost 90,000 troops in the Gulf region, a number that may double within weeks. Reflecting rising tensions, the Turkish military began moving troops from western Turkey to its border with Iraq on Sunday.

Facing a US-led invasion, Iraq invited the two chief UN weapons inspectors back to Baghdad and Amin promised that the government would "do our best" to make Saturday's visit successful.

In New York, Iraq's UN Ambassador, Mohamed Al-Douri, struck a more emphatic tone, saying in a Fox Television interview: "I think they will find solution for all remaining issues between both parties."

The chief inspectors are hoping that they will win meaningful concessions from the Iraqis on reconnaissance U-2 flights and private interviews with Iraqi scientists—two of the issues the inspectors say have stalled progress so far. *AP*

WORLDBRIEFS

N. Korea fully ready

SEOUL—North Korea said Monday its military and people are fully prepared to counter what it called US plans to invade amid a nuclear crisis on the Korean Peninsula. US officials suspect the North may be moving closer to nuclear weapons development, and US media said Washington was contemplating the dispatch of military reinforcements to the region as it prepares for a possible war against Iraq. US officials have said they have no intention of invading North Korea. "Our military and people are in full combat readiness to cope with US imperialist warmongers' indiscriminate military and political moves under their strategy to dominate the Korean Peninsula," the North's official Radio Pyongyang quoted a military official as saying. *AP*

Probe pressed

SEOUL—South Korea's main opposition party on Monday rejected the president-elect's proposal for a political settlement to a dispute over payments made by a business group to North Korea shortly before an inter-Korean summit in 2000. Opposition lawmakers claim the money was given to the communist North ahead of the summit—possibly from South Korea's government—as "payment" for the talks. Government auditors confirmed Thursday that the Hyundai business group had spent US$186 million in the North obtained from a South Korean state-run bank, but said the purposes were unclear. President-elect Roh Moo-hyun "wants details of the scandal to be brought to light but it would be better to let the National Assembly decide how to resolve the dispute," said Lee Nak-yon, a spokesperson for Roh. *AP*

Shadow over haj

RIYADH—Saudi Arabia said the peak of this year's haj pilgrimage, in which about two million Muslims will retrace the footsteps of Prophet Mohammad, would fall on Feb. 10, the Saudi Press Agency reported late on Sunday. The prospect of a US-led war on Iraq for allegedly concealing banned weapons of mass destruction has cast a shadow over the pilgrimage taking place amid rising sentiment among Muslims opposed to an attack. Saudi Arabia says it has taken precautions to ensure a trouble-free haj. An estimated 1.2 million pilgrims have already arrived, including 16,000 Iraqis according to official figures. *AP*

Brunei divorce

BANDAR SERI BEGAWAN—The sultan of Brunei, Hassanal Bolkiah, has announced he will divorce his second wife, former air hostess Mariam Haji Abdul Aziz. In an announcement late Sunday on state-owned television, Hassanal's brother, Prince Sufri Bolkiah, said the sultan had declared a divorce with Mariam under Brunei's Islamic law. Mariam, who was a 26-year-old Brunei Airlines air hostess when the 35-year-old sultan proposed marriage in 1981, was immediately stripped of her titles. No reason was given for the divorce, but rumors have been rife for months that the couple were estranged. *AP*

Havel steps down

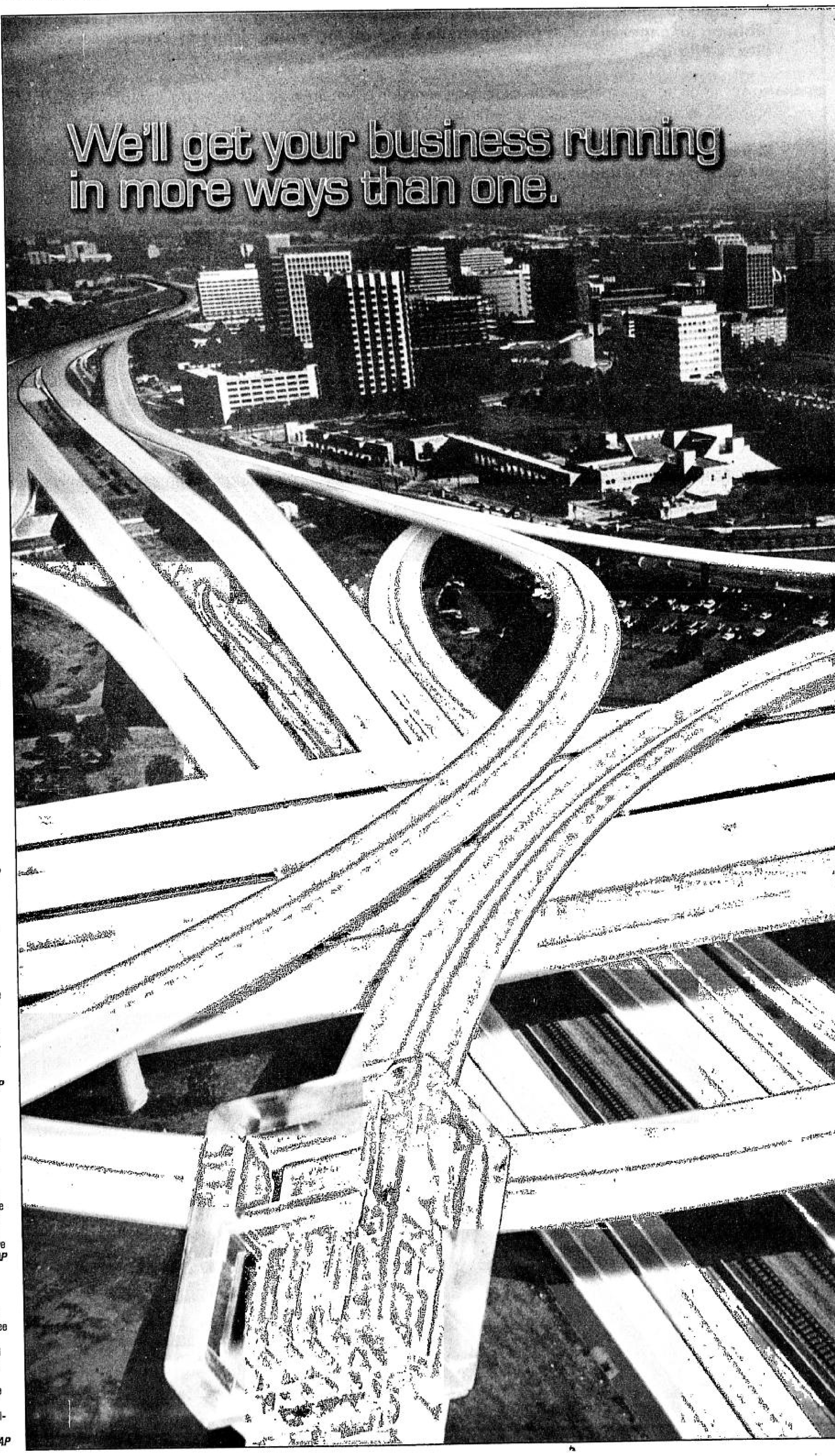
PRAGUE—Vaclav Havel, the former dissident playwright who led the revolutionary movement that toppled communism peacefully here 13 years ago, marked the end of his final presidential term with a heartfelt speech to the nation. "I bid you farewell as your president," Havel said at the end of an address broadcast on Czech state television only hours before his term expired at midnight Sunday. "I remain with you as your fellow citizen." During the prerecorded five-minute speech, he thanked the Czech people for their support and asked their forgiveness for his mistakes. He also alluded to the dramatic events that marked the nation's transition from communism to democracy since he first came to power in 1989. *AP*

AIDS epidemic

KATMANDU—About 4.2 million people are living with AIDS in South Asia and the epidemic is worsening in the region, health officials said Monday. Lack of education and trafficking in women and children are the main reasons for the spread of the disease, health officials from eight South Asian countries and the United Nations said at a conference in Nepal's capital, Katmandu. "There were 4.2 million people living with AIDS in South Asia in 2001 compared to 2 million in 1994. The number is growing every year and it getting worse," said Peter Piot, executive director of UNAIDS, the UN's AIDS agency. *AP*

Hotel fire kills 33

BEIJING—Thirty-three people died when flames swept through a hotel in China's frigid northeast on the Chinese New Year weekend, forcing guests to flee through smoke-choked hallways and smash windows in a frantic search for air, the government said Monday. Authorities immediately ordered safety inspections across Harbin, the city where the blaze broke out. The official Xinhua News Agency said the fire Sunday night tore through the Tiantan Hotel in Harbin, the capital of Heilongjiang province near China's border with Russia. Most of the victims died from smoke inhalation, one doctor said. *AP*



Explosion rocks Indon police HQ

JAKARTA—A bomb exploded inside Indonesia's police headquarters compound in Jakarta early Monday, damaging two cars and a building, police and witnesses said.

No one was injured in the blast, which police said originated from a small device left in a parking lot outside a meeting room in the complex.

National police chief Gen. Da'i Bachtiar said officers spotted the bomb, which was hidden in a black bag, before it went off.

"Police found the bomb, but it exploded while they were waiting for the bomb squad to arrive," he told parliament later Monday, adding that police believed it was set off by a timer.

No one claimed responsibility, and police said it was too early to speculate on who might be behind the bombing.

Witnesses said two vehicles and the meeting room, which is also hired out for weddings and other functions, were slightly damaged in the explosion in south Jakarta.

On Oct. 12, at least 192 people were killed when two bombs exploded on Indonesia's tourist island of Bali. Jemaah Islamiyah, a regional terrorist group with links to the al-Qaida network, is said to have been responsible.

Since then, police have blamed several other blasts in Indonesia, including a deadly series of church bombings in 2002, on the same group.

A total of 29 suspects have been arrested in connection with the Bali bombings, but police say several key suspects are still on the run. *AP*

Jemaah Islamiyah leader arrested on Indon island

JAKARTA—Indonesian police said Monday they have arrested a leading member of the Jemaah Islamiyah (JI) regional terror network who had allegedly plotted to crash a hijacked plane in Singapore.

Mas Selamat, the chief in Singapore of JI's operations, was arrested Sunday night aboard a bus in the town of Tanjung Pinang on Sumatra island, said national detective chief Commissioner General Erwin Mappaseng.

Mappaseng said Indonesian police had "received a red notice from Interpol about him in relation to a plan to hijack planes in Bangkok and Singapore, in which he was supposed to crash them."

He said Singaporean police tipped off his office a month ago that Selamat was in Indonesia.

The detective chief said Selamat entered Indonesia through the port of Dumai in Riau province on Sumatra by using a fake passport and identification card.

He was supposed to meet two unidentified Singaporeans on Sunday night before traveling on to Central Java province. The detective chief did not give reasons for that intended trip.

Singapore's Home Affairs Ministry has identified the JI leader as Mas Selamat bin Kastari.

He and other Singapore JI members fled the city-state when security operations against their cell began in December 2001. Thirteen people were detained during the operations for an alleged plot to blow up American and other foreign targets.

"Mas Selamat is known to have discussed with Hambali and others plans to retaliate against the Singapore government for the disruption of JI, including a plan to hijack a US, British or Singapore plane and crash it into Changi Airport," according to a White Paper released last month by the Singapore government.

Hambali is suspected of being the operational commander of JI.

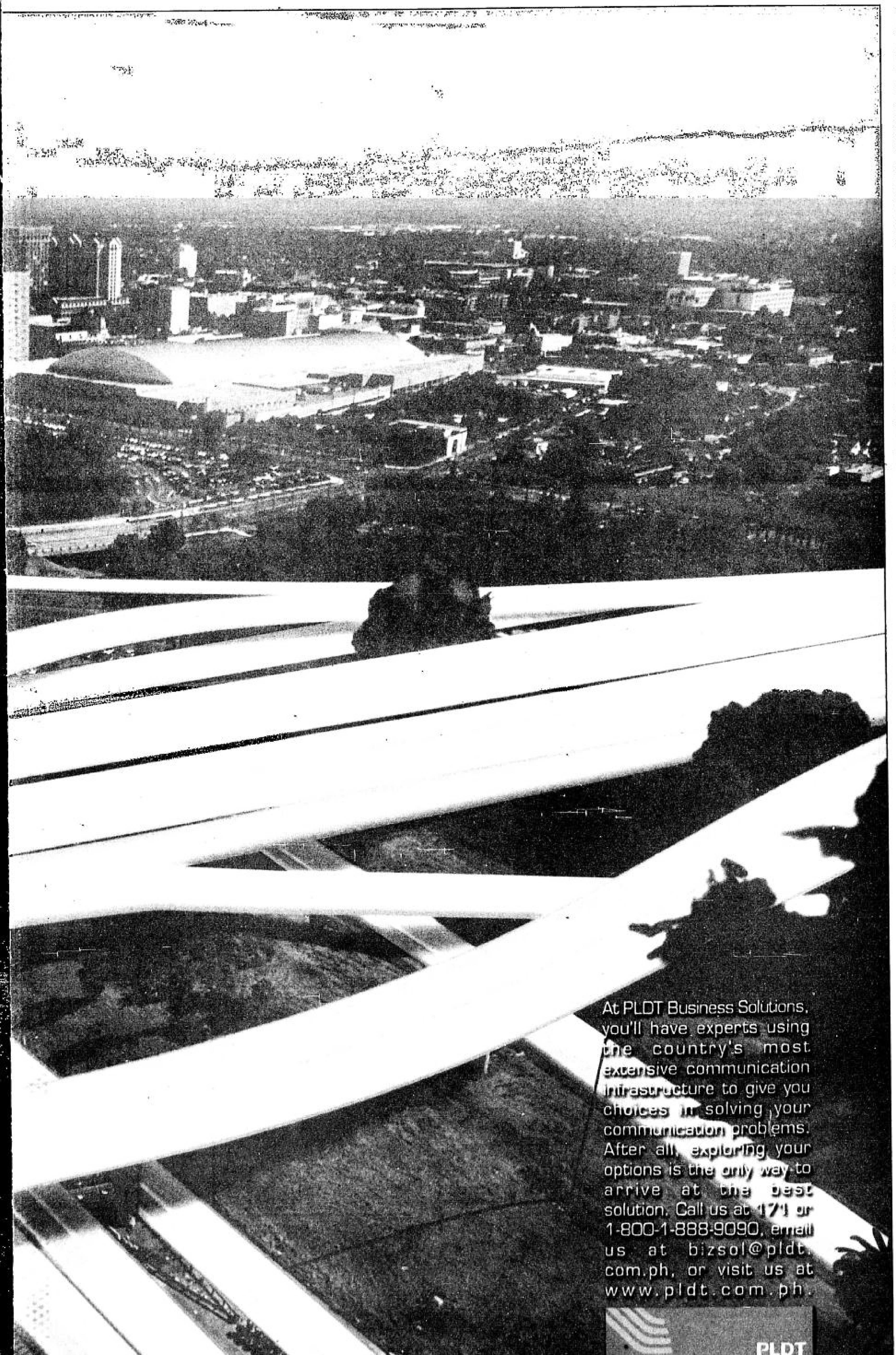
Singapore Prime Minister Goh Chok Tong has said that Mas Selamat and four other JI members escaped from Singapore in January 2002 and fled to Thailand.

They allegedly planned to hijack a plane from Indonesia, Malaysia or Thailand and crash it into Changi, Goh has said.

Police say JI, which is allegedly linked to the al-Qaida network, was to blame for the Oct. 12 Bali bombing that killed more than 190 people.

Malaysia has detained more than 70 suspected Islamic militants in the past 18 months, many of whom are said to be members of JI. Singapore has rounded up 31 alleged JI members.

JI's alleged spiritual leader, Abu Bakar Bashir, has been detained in Jakarta since Oct. 20 on charges of treason and over a series of bomb attacks two years ago. Police say he is also a likely suspect in the Bali bombings. *AFP*



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Bomb kills one in Pakistan port

KARACHI—A bomb apparently hidden in a motorcycle detonated in the southern port city of Karachi on Monday in the parking lot of a state-oil company, killing one person and injuring at least seven, police said.

The explosion, which could be heard for kilometers, shattered glass and overturned motorcycles in the parking lot of the Pakistan State Oil company, witnesses and police said. An office of an anti-terrorist police unit was also nearby, and the target of the blast was not immediately clear, authorities said.

Authorities were trying to determine if the person killed in the explosion was the driver of the motorcycle.

"We are investigating and trying to determine who was behind this bomb explosion," deputy police chief Tariq Jamil told The Associated Press. "No group has yet claimed responsibility." *AP*

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Tuesday, February 4, 2003
4th Week in Ordinary Time

1st Reading: Heb 12:1-4
Gospel: Mk 5:21-43

Jesus crossed to the other side of the lake and while he was still on the shore, a large crowd gathered around him. Jairus, an official of the synagogue, came up and seeing Jesus, threw himself at his feet and asked him earnestly, "My little daughter is at the point of death. Come and lay your hands on her so that she may get well and live."

Jesus went with him and many people followed, pressing from every side. Among the crowd was a woman who had suffered from bleeding for twelve years. She had suffered a lot at the hands of many doctors and had spent everything she had, but instead of getting better, she was worse. Since she had heard about Jesus, this woman came up behind him and touched his cloak thinking, "If I just touch his clothing, I shall get well." Her flow of blood dried up at once, and she felt in her body that she was healed of her complaint.

But Jesus was conscious that healing power had gone out from him, so he turned around in the crowd and asked, "Who touched my clothes?" His disciples answered, "You see how the people are crowding around you. Why do you ask who touched you?" But he kept looking around to see who had done it. Then the woman, aware of what had happened, came forward trembling and afraid. She knelt before him and told him the whole truth.

Then Jesus said to her, "Daughter, your faith has saved you; go in peace and be free of this illness."

While Jesus was still speaking, some people arrived from the official's house to inform him, "Your daughter is dead. Why trouble the Master any further?" But Jesus ignored what they said and told the official, "Do not fear, just believe." And he allowed no one to follow him except Peter, James and John, the brother of James.

When they arrived at the house, Jesus saw a great commotion with people weeping and wailing loudly. Jesus entered and said to them, "Why all this commotion and weeping? The child is not dead but asleep." They laughed at him. But Jesus sent them outside and went with the child's father and mother and his companions into the room where the child lay. Taking her by the hand, he said to her, "Talitha kumi!" which means: "Little girl, get up!" The girl got up at once and began to walk around. (She was twelve years old.) The parents were astonished, greatly astonished. Jesus strictly ordered them not to let anyone know about it, and told them to give her something to eat.

Commentary

In today's gospel, lengthy episodes with many interesting teachings are seen. Let us stop to consider the attitude of the woman sick with hemorrhage. Among us, there are many like her today. They go to church to touch the images of Christ, the Virgin or the saints in order to be delivered from their ailments. This is what we refer to as popular religiosity. How do we evaluate these religious practices? Jesus gives us a good judgment: what is essential is not the exterior practice that is always relative, but the attitude of faith that the person brings to practice.

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Explosion at Nigeria bank building kills 40

LAGOS, Nigeria—A powerful explosion tore apart a bank and dozens of apartments above it in Nigeria's crowded commercial capital Sunday, killing at least 40 people and trapping many others, relief workers said.

Police were investigating a range of motives—including that the blast could have been part of a bank robbery plot. Looting and bloody fights broke out as hundreds of young men grabbed fistfuls of cash from the leveled bank and battled over them.

In the chaos, trapped victims cried for rescue and onlookers wailed as rescuers retrieved bloody, broken bodies.

The Red Cross said searchers had recovered more than 30 dead and 32 injured. Ten of the wounded died later at Lagos General Hospital, hospital workers said.

Many more victims were believed caught in the rubble, and the death toll could rise, said Emmanuel Ijewere, president of the Nigeria Red Cross.

The blast occurred about 12:30 p.m. on Lagos Island, a high-rise district of banks and other businesses packed side-by-side with poor, densely populated residential blocks.

The four-story bank building collapsed, bringing three floors of apartments crashing down on the ground floor of Prudent Bank. Fires flared briefly after the blast, which could be heard for kilometers and sent a tower of smoke into the sky.

The explosion heavily damaged two adjoining buildings and shattered windows for blocks around.

Residents said some victims had been blocks away from the bank building.

"My uncle was in the balcony of our house talking with a friend and the force of the explosion threw them down," resident Remi Oyebanji said. "They're both dead." *AP*

Chavez declares victory

CARACAS, Venezuela—Hundreds of thousands of Venezuelans signed a petition demanding that President Hugo Chavez resign, even as he defiantly claimed victory over opposition leaders whose two-month strike is weakening.

More than four million Venezuelans signed a petition calling for several initiatives aimed at ousting Chavez, including one that would cut his term from six to four years, petition organizers said late Sunday. The figure could not be verified. Tens of thousands celebrated on a Caracas highway after the petition centers closed.

"The pen is our weapon," said Julio Borges of the opposition party Justice First. "Today demonstrates that the struggle hasn't ended. It didn't end with the strike."

Chavez, however, claimed outright victory over his foes after they agreed on Friday to ease the already-waning strike to protect businesses from bankruptcy. Those that remained closed—including factories, malls and franchise restaurants—are expected to open this week for restricted hours, strike leaders said. *AP*

Australia hands out terror kits

SYDNEY—Every Australian household from this week will receive a government-sponsored anti-terrorism kit designed to help citizens identify terrorists, under a scheme launched Monday.

The kit, which also contains tips on how to survive an attack, forms part of the government's US$8.85-million anti-terror campaign launched in the aftermath of last October's Bali bombing in which more than 190 people died, including 88 Australians.

Security at airports, Parliament House in Canberra and foreign embassies has been increased and television advertisements urge people to be alert to possible terrorists in their neighborhoods and to report suspicious behavior.

The kit also includes a fridge magnet listing emergency telephone numbers and a glossy, 20-page information booklet which explains what the government has done to protect the country and outlines what citizens can do to protect themselves. *AFP*

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ORIGIN: MANILA

DESTINATION	FLT NO.	FREQ.	ACFT	ETD	ETA	VALUE		2-DAY ADVANCE	
						ONE-WAY	ROUNDTRIP	ONE-WAY	ROUNDTRIP
CEBU	5J - 557	Daily	DC9	0130	0240	P2,199*	P4,398*	P1,849	P3,698
	5J - 559	Daily	DC9	0500	0610	P2,569	P5,138		
	5J - 561	Daily	DC9	0700	0810				
	5J - 563	Daily	DC9	0900	1010				
	5J - 565	Daily	DC9	1100	1210				
	5J - 567	Daily	DC9	1300	1410				
	5J - 577	Wed/Sat	B757	1325	1435				
	5J - 569	Daily	DC9	1500	1610				
	5J - 571	Daily	DC9	1700	1810				
DAVAO	5J - 961	Daily	DC9	0500	0640	P3,239	P6,478	P2,288	P4,576
	5J - 963	Daily	DC9	0930	1110				
	5J - 965	Daily	DC9	1320	1500				
	5J - 967	Daily	DC9	1540	1720				
CAGAYAN de ORO	5J - 381	Daily	DC9	0510	0635	P3,239	P6,478	P2,349	P4,698
	5J - 383	Daily	DC9	0900	1025				
TACLOBAN	5J - 651	Daily	DC9	0610	0720	P2,569	P5,138	P1,999	P3,998
	5J - 655	Daily	DC9	1210	1320				
ILOILO	5J - 451	Daily	DC9	0500	0600	P2,449	P4,898	P1,599	P3,198
	5J - 453	Daily	DC9	0620	0720				
	5J - 455	Daily	DC9	0955	1055				
	5J - 459	Daily	DC9	1600	1700				
BACOLOD	5J - 473	Daily	DC9	0510	0610	P2,449	P4,898	P1,799	P3,598
	5J - 475	Daily	DC9	1000	1100				
	5J - 479	Daily	DC9	1650	1750				
ZAMBOANGA	5J - 851	Daily	DC9	0520	0650	P3,239	P6,478	P2,079	P4,158
ROXAS	5J - 373	Daily	DC9	0530	0630	P2,199	P4,398	P1,799	P3,598
DUMAGUETE	5J - 627	Daily	DC9	1300	1410	P2,569	P5,138	P1,999	P3,998
KALIBO	5J - 339	Daily	DC9	0950	1040	P2,569	P5,138	P1,999	P3,998
BUTUAN	5J - 787	Daily	DC9	0900	1025	P3,239	P6,478	P2,349	P4,698
SUBIC	5J - 102	Th/Sun	B757	1210	1240	P500	P999	-	-

* Promotional Value Fare

ORIGIN: CEBU

DESTINATION	FLT NO.	FREQ.	ACFT	ETD	ETA	VALUE		2-DAY ADVANCE	
						ONE-WAY	ROUNDTRIP	ONE-WAY	ROUNDTRIP
MANILA	5J - 556	Th/Sun	B757	0300	0410	P2,199*	P4,398*	-	-
	5J - 558	Daily	DC9	0400	0510	P2,199*	P4,398*	P1,849	P3,698
	5J - 560	Daily	DC9	0700	0810	P2,569	P5,138		
	5J - 562	Daily	DC9	0900	1010				
	5J - 564	Daily	DC9	1100	1210				
	5J - 566	Daily	DC9	1300	1410				
	5J - 568	Daily	DC9	1500	1610				
	5J - 570	Daily	DC9	1700	1810				
	5J - 572	Daily	DC9	1900	2010				
DAVAO	5J - 593	Daily	DC9	0800	0850	P2,249	P4,498	P1,649	P3,298
	5J - 597	Daily	DC9	1450	1540				
ZAMBOANGA	5J - 431	M/W/F/Sat	DC9	0905	1000	P2,319	P4,638	P1,969	P3,938
ILOILO	5J - 164	Daily	DC9	1750	1825	P1,759	P3,518	P1,249	P2,498
BACOLOD	5J - 126	Daily	DC9	0810	0840	P1,539	P3,078	P 999	P1,998

* Promotional Value Fare

ORIGIN: DAVAO

DESTINATION	FLT NO.	FREQ.	ACFT	ETD	ETA	VALUE		2-DAY ADVANCE	
						ONE-WAY	ROUNDTRIP	ONE-WAY	ROUNDTRIP
MANILA	5J - 962	Daily	DC9	0720	0900	P3,239	P6,478	P2,288	P4,576
	5J - 964	Daily	DC9	1210	1350				
	5J - 966	Daily	DC9	1540	1720				
	5J - 968	Daily	DC9	1800	1940				
CEBU	5J - 594	Daily	DC9	0930	1020	P2,249	P4,498	P1,649	P3,298
	5J - 598	Daily	DC9	1620	1710				
ILOILO –via Cebu	5J - 598/164	Daily	DC9	1620	1825	P3,195	P6,390	P2,199	P4,398
ZAMBOANGA	5J - 393	Tu/Th/Sun	DC9	0910	1010	P2,319	P4,638	P2,049	P4,098

ORIGIN: DUMAGUETE

DESTINATION	FLT NO.	FREQ.	ACFT	ETD	ETA	VALUE		2-DAY ADVANCE	
						ONE-WAY	ROUNDTRIP	ONE-WAY	ROUNDTRIP
MANILA	5J - 628	Daily	DC9	1450	1600	P2,569	P5,138	P1,999	P3,998

ORIGIN: BACOLOD

DESTINATION	FLT NO.	FREQ.	ACFT	ETD	ETA	VALUE		2-DAY ADVANCE	
						ONE-WAY	ROUNDTRIP	ONE-WAY	ROUNDTRIP
MANILA	5J - 474	Daily	DC9	0920	1020	P2,449	P4,898	P1,799	P3,598
	5J - 476	Daily	DC9	1150	1250				
	5J - 480	Daily	DC9	1840	1940				
CEBU	5J - 125	Daily	DC9	0700	0730	P1,539	P3,078	P999	P 1,998

ORIGIN: BUTUAN

DESTINATION	FLT NO.	FREQ.	ACFT	ETD	ETA	VALUE		2-DAY ADVANCE	
						ONE-WAY	ROUNDTRIP	ONE-WAY	ROUNDTRIP
MANILA	5J - 788	Daily	DC9	1115	1240	P3,239	P6,478	P2,349	P4,698

ORIGIN: ILOILO

DESTINATION	FLT NO.	FREQ.	ACFT	ETD	ETA	VALUE		2-DAY ADVANCE	
						ONE-WAY	ROUNDTRIP	ONE-WAY	ROUNDTRIP
MANILA	5J - 454	Daily	DC9	0800	0900	P2,449	P4,898	P1,599	P3,198
	5J - 456	Daily	DC9	1135	1235				
	5J - 460	Daily	DC9	1740	1840				
	5J - 462	Daily	DC9	1905	2005				
CEBU	5J - 161	Daily	DC9	0640	0715	P1,759	P3,518	P1,249	P2,498
DAVAO –via Cebu	5J - 161/593	Daily	DC9	0640	0850	P3,195	P6,390	P2,199	P4,398

ORIGIN: TACLOBAN

DESTINATION	FLT NO.	FREQ.	ACFT	ETD	ETA	VALUE		2-DAY ADVANCE	
						ONE-WAY	ROUNDTRIP	ONE-WAY	ROUNDTRIP
MANILA	5J - 652	Daily	DC9	0800	0910	P2,569	P5,138	P1,999	P3,998
	5J - 656	Daily	DC9	1400	1510				

ORIGIN: ZAMBOANGA

DESTINATION	FLT NO.	FREQ.	ACFT	ETD	ETA	VALUE		2-DAY ADVANCE	
						ONE-WAY	ROUNDTRIP	ONE-WAY	ROUNDTRIP
MANILA	5J - 852	Daily	DC9	1050	1220	P3,239	P6,478	P2,079	P4,158
CEBU	5J - 432	M/W/F/Sat	DC9	0730	0825	P2,319	P4,638	P1,969	P3,938
DAVAO	5J - 394	Tu/Th/Sun	DC9	0730	0830	P2,319	P4,638	P2,049	P4,098

ORIGIN: ROXAS

DESTINATION	FLT NO.	FREQ.	ACFT	ETD	ETA	VALUE		2-DAY ADVANCE	
						ONE-WAY	ROUNDTRIP	ONE-WAY	ROUNDTRIP
MANILA	5J - 374	Daily	DC9	0710	0810	P2,199	P4,398	P1,799	P3,598

ORIGIN: CAGAYAN DE ORO

DESTINATION	FLT NO.	FREQ.	ACFT	ETD	ETA	VALUE		2-DAY ADVANCE	
						ONE-WAY	ROUNDTRIP	ONE-WAY	ROUNDTRIP
MANILA	5J - 382	Daily	DC9	0715	0840	P3,239	P6,478	P2,349	P4,698
	5J - 384	Daily	DC9	1105	1230				

ORIGIN: KALIBO

DESTINATION	FLT NO.	FREQ.	ACFT	ETD	ETA	VALUE		2-DAY ADVANCE	
						ONE-WAY	ROUNDTRIP	ONE-WAY	ROUNDTRIP
MANILA	5J - 340	Daily	DC9	1120	1210	P2,569	P5,138	P1,999	P3,998

ORIGIN: SUBIC

DESTINATION	FLT NO.	FREQ.	ACFT	ETD	ETA	VALUE		2-DAY ADVANCE	
						ONE-WAY	ROUNDTRIP	ONE-WAY	ROUNDTRIP
MANILA	5J - 103	Th/Sun	B757	2330	2400	P500	P999	-	-

INTERNATIONAL FLIGHTS

FROM	-	TO	FLT NO.	FREQ.	ACFT	ETD*	ETA*
MANILA	-	HONGKONG	5J - 110	Daily	B757/DC9	0700	0900
			5J - 118	Daily	B757/DC9	1640	1840
HONG KONG	-	MANILA	5J - 111	Daily	B757/DC9	1000	1200
			5J - 119	Daily	B757/DC9	1940	2140
MANILA	-	SEOUL	5J - 194	Mon	B757	1340	1840
			5J - 1944	Fri	B757	1340	1840
CEBU	-	SEOUL	5J - 128	Wed	B757	1535	2115
			5J - 1288	Sat	B757	1535	2115
SUBIC	-	SEOUL	5J - 196	Th	B757	1340	1840
			5J - 1966	Sun	B757	1340	1840
SEOUL	-	MANILA	5J - 195	Mon	B757	1955	2250
			5J - 1955	Fri	B757	1955	2250
SEOUL	-	CEBU	5J - 129	Wed	B757	2225	0155
			5J - 1299	Sat	B757	2225	0155
SEOUL	-	SUBIC	5J - 197	Th	B757	1955	2250
			5J - 1977	Sun	B757	1955	2250

*Local Time

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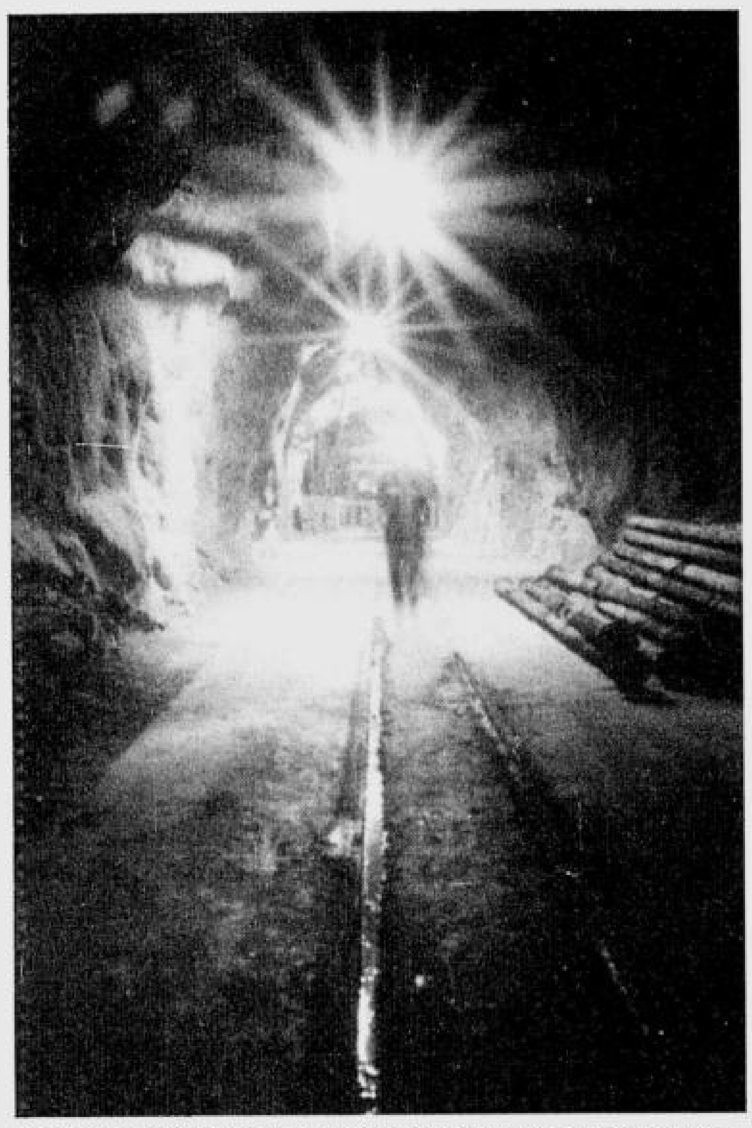
Strike paralyzes mining operations



A LEPANTO mine tunnel, one of the areas forced to close due to the strike. EV ESPIRITU

BAGUIO CITY—Operations of the Lepanto Consolidated Mining Co. (LCMC) were paralyzed on Sunday by a union strike over the firm's policy mandating compulsory holiday work even during Christmas, labor officials said.

The 1,526-member Lepanto Employees Union (LEU) and the 160-member Lepanto Local Staff Union (LLSU) locked out company employees as early as Sunday dawn, hitting the firm's first shift, said Flor Fajilan, LCMC spokesperson.

The unions have been opposing a two-year-old company rule that compels employees to work for premium pay during official holidays, "a ruling that altered the goodwill between the firm and the workers," a union lawyer said.

Their complaints about the ruling surfaced in December 2002 during the Christmas holiday break, the lawyer said.

"Of course, it is a proper sentiment. Who would want to work on Christmas Day?" an LCMC employee said.

Until 2000, LCMC employees were allowed to volunteer their work shifts during holiday breaks, said Fajilan, but the firm always ended up with only half of their day's roster. The reduced work teams during holidays imperiled their daily operations, he said.

"We pay them larger premiums (that reach 200 percent or more) than the government-set wage standard for holiday work," Fajilan said.

He said the company lost up to P4 million in potential revenues for the last two days of the strike.

"We don't think the holiday demand is worth striking over, and we will raise this to (the Department of Labor and Employment). We have been negotiating properly since December (when the union first signified its intention to strike)," he said.

The holiday ruling is part of a number of complaints which the LEC and the LLSU had been discussing with LCMC officials for two years now, said Marietta Morales, Cordillera director of the National Conciliation and Mediation Board (NCMB).

Among their complaints are a company ruling that enforced a new work-time standard and the existence of a "labor-only contracting" policy which intruded into legitimate work loads of employees.

Morales said the NCMB had been arbitrating the union dispute until Jan. 24, when LCMC officials elevated their problem to DOLE.

The unions decided to stage the strike on Saturday night, a week after it submitted its strike notice to acting Labor Secretary Manuel Ymson, their lawyer told the INQUIRER.

Labor Secretary Patricia Sto. Tomas had joined President Macapagal-Arroyo in Kuwait.

But Ymson assumed jurisdiction over the contract disputes on Jan. 28 when the union decided to clamp down on the firm's operations, Morales said. The unions received Ymson's assumption order on Friday.

The unions' lawyer said the employees would continue their strike until Ymson or the LCMC reopened talks on the firm's disputed policies. *Vincent Cabreza, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

Negros groups propose plebiscite for Cha-cha

MEMBERS of civil society groups in Negros Occidental proposed that a plebiscite be held to determine if people wanted the Constitution to be amended rather than leave the decision to legislators.

They also demanded that legislators and other government officials devote their time to poverty alleviation instead of Charter change.

"If the politicians remain stubborn because of their selfish motives, like many others, we propose to put the question of Charter change before the people in a referendum in 2004, together with the elections," said the Peace Advocates of Negros, No Erap and No-to-Chacha in a joint statement issued on Sunday.

Civil society here lamented that the politicians dangled the issue of Charter change again in the wake of massive poverty affecting at least 30 percent of the Filipino people. *(See related story on Page A16.)*

"Will Charter change create more jobs so that many of the seven million (overseas Filipino workers), particularly the fathers and mothers can return home, work here and live with their families? Will Charter change reduce the price of medicines and save the lives of babies and other sick patients dying in public hospitals everyday for lack of medical care?" they asked.

The group said they supported the stand of the Bacolod Diocese, cautioning against Charter change and a constituent assembly.

"The Philippines needs Charter change now like the world needs war in Iraq. Like President Bush who does not speak for the world when he says war against Iraq is justified, neither do our politicians represent the Filipino people when they say charter change is needed now," they added. *Carla Gomez, PDI Visayas Bureau*

GMA continues pitch for Congress to pass bill on transmission

By Nestor P. Burgos Jr.
PDI Visayas Bureau

ESTANCIA, Iloilo—President Macapagal-Arroyo reiterated her call for Congress to pass the bill privatizing the National Transmission Corp. (Transco) to prevent a major power crisis in the country.

She said the privatization of the power industry would solve the lack of huge capital for the power sector.

The President made the statements during ceremonies marking the reactivation of a 32-megawatt diesel generation set in the port of this town, 135.5 km north of Iloilo City.

The National Power Corporation-owned Power Barge 103 underwent repairs but was returned due to the worsening power shortage on Panay Island.

Speaking mostly in Hiligaynon, the President said the delay in the passage of the bill has affected the Visayas grid the most, which will suffer a power supply crisis in the next few years because of its thin power reserves.

The current power demand in Panay reaches 105.22 MW, higher than its total power generation capacity of 47.8 MW. The shortage has been offset by the 63 MW coming from submarine cables on Negros Island.

Increase

But the deficit is expected to increase as the power demand increases to an estimated 133.1 MW this year, 141.8 MW next year and 173.6 MW in 2005.

"If we don't act now, we will have a serious power shortage in the Visayas by 2004," said the President.

She said that in the next 10 years, the Visayas region needs to put up more power generating sets that could boost its power supply by 1,000 MW while the whole country needs an additional 6,000 MW supply.

She said that without privatization, the relocation of power barges in Luzon could not be undertaken permanently to relieve the thin power reserves of Panay.

She said privatization can only be effective if it creates "an investment climate that is attractive to both domestic and foreign investors and if the process is transparent and free from corruption."

This will also eliminate the dependence of the power industry on government subsidy, which reached P32 billion last year.

The President said there are at least six private power firms interested in investing on Panay Island.

Franchise

Senate President Franklin Drilon said he was confident that the Senate would pass the Transco bill. He said the bill would be passed if the senators agree on the provision in the House version of the bill that delegates authority to grant franchises to power firms to the executive department.

The President announced that she has directed the energy department to hold consultations in all the provinces of Western Visayas to discuss plans to relocate Napocor-owned power plants from Luzon to the Visayas and the development of alternative sources of power.

The President also directed the fast-tracking of energy projects on Negros Island including the putting up of a 40-MW generating set in Northern Negros.

In Roxas City, the President was greeted with streamers and banners asking her to reconsider her earlier pronouncement that she would no longer run in next year's presidential elections.

The President passed by Capiz on her way to Iloilo to inspect the seaport in Barangay Culasi here, which has lately been the butt of controversy after its P180-million reclamation project was found sinking.

In a speech during a short program held at the Culasi port grounds, the President did not touch on the defect of the project, which was approved during the term of her predecessor, former President Joseph Estrada.

Instead, she proudly declared "Roxas City as now part of the national nautical highway" because of the port's roll-on, roll-off facilities.

'Roll-on, roll-off'

She said she has recently signed an executive order providing greater public and private participation in the country's roll-on, roll-off system.

The President also did not comment on the clamor for her to run in next year's presidential race as manifested in the streamers and banners that greeted her from the Roxas City airport to the Culasi port.

She instead invited investors both avail themselves of loans from the Development Bank of the Philippines to buy a ferryboat to start a Roxas City-Misdate route. *With a report from Gerry T. Pagharion, PDI Visayas Bureau*

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ROUNDUP

Building a bridge

LEGAZPI CITY—The Department of Public Works and Highways in Bicol has ordered the resumption of construction of the Rainbow Bridge in Basud, Sto. Domingo town, according to DPWH Bicol acting director Orlando Roces. The DPWH suspended the bridge construction after it discovered seepage in the bridge's foundation, prompting the agency to re-design the project. Roces said they are now waiting for the approval by DPWH of the re-designed plan. ***Joyce Mejillano, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau***

3 robbers fall

IMUS, Cavite—Police arrested three suspects, including a former policeman, allegedly responsible for the P2.6 million robbery in Makro Philippines on Dec. 22 in Barangay Anabu here. Senior Supt. Roberto Rosales, Cavite police director, identified the suspects as Magdalino Pontacio alias Pontil, 37, a security guard and resident of Dasmariñas, Cavite; Jonathan Dayao, 23, a construction worker, of Bacoor, Cavite; and SPO2 Junel Zunio, 43, ex-policeman of Dasmariñas, Cavite. The suspects were arrested in their residences through a warrant issued by Dasmariñas Municipal Trial Court Judge Lorinda Toledo. ***Fausto Tatad Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau***

NPA shoots cop

DASMARIÑAS, Cavite—Three suspected members of the New People's Army shot a policeman in Barangay San Lorenzo here Saturday night, police said. The victim, identified as SPO4 Francisco Lotoner, was shot while he was on board a Paliparan-bound jeep driven by one Moreno Ramos. Lotoner suffered three bullet wounds and was rushed to the Jose Rizal Hospital where he was pronounced dead on arrival. ***Fausto Tatad Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau***

Watershed summit

LUCENA CITY—The provincial government, Department of Environment and Natural Resources and Tanggol Kalikasan signed a memorandum of joint cooperation on Friday to hold a provincial watershed summit to serve as a forum for government and other sectors to discuss and develop action plans to protect and manage what remains of the province's watershed areas. Estacio Lim Jr., Tanggol-Kalikasan community coordinator, said the province may soon run out of potable spring water if the watershed areas continue to be neglected. ***Delfin Mallari Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau***

Photo contest

THE FEDERATION of Philippine Photographers Foundation announced an on-the-spot photo contest on Pahimis 2003, the coffee festival of Amadeo, Cavite to be held on Feb. 14-16. The photo tilt is open to all photographers, amateur or professional. Amadeo Mayor Albert Ambagan Jr. said 10 winners will be picked everyday during the festival dates and each will receive P1,500. The grand prize winner will be selected among the 30 finalists.

Sultans' new chair

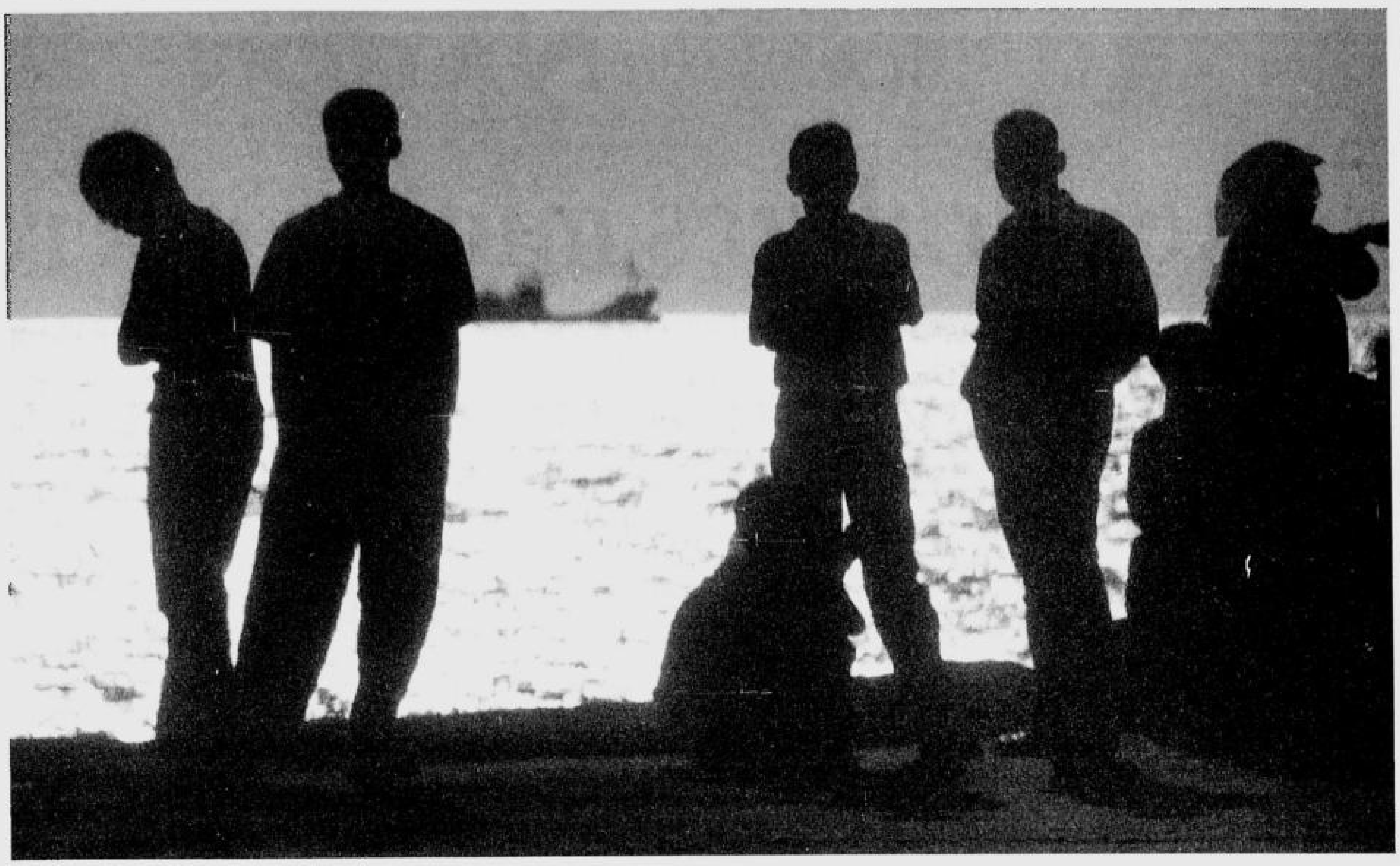
TARAKA, Lanao del Sur—The Sultans of the Pata Pangampong ko Ranao constituting the Four Principalities of Lanao recently met to proclaim their Chair, Sultan Topaan Disomimba, reigning Sultan of the Royal House of Masiu. The meeting of the 16 sultans held in MSU, Marawi City, was witnessed by 28 legislative houses, *ulama*, religious leaders and professionals led by the brothers Dry Nagasura and Abdulah Madale and former president James Lucman of MSU. The Pata Pangampong Ko Ranao is a traditional government which antedates the existing system. In pre-Spanish days the Muslim communities were governed by sultans who exercised executive, legislate and judicial powers and authority.

Lifeguard stations

LEGAZPI CITY—Philippine Tourism Authority general manager Robert Dean Barbers committed P1 million for the construction of two lifeguard stations in Bagasbas Bay in Daet, Camarines Norte, according to Daet Mayor Tito Sarion. Bagasbas is a favorite destination of sea surfers due to the presence of big waves, as it faces the Pacific Ocean. Sarion said Barbers also assured him of financial assistance in the establishment of a Daet foundation landmark. ***Joyce Mejillano, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau***

Homecoming

THE JOSENIAN engineers of the University of San Jose-Recoletos (USJ-R), Cebu City announced their Grand Alumni Homecoming on Feb. 23 at the Sacred Heart Center, Jakosalem St., Cebu City. For details, call Olive or Eddie Diva of the Engineering Alumni Secretariat at USJ-R College of Engineering, Main Campus, Magallanes St., Cebu City at tel. number (032)254-7900 local 290; director and chairman, Publicity and Promotion of the Engineering Homecoming Organizing Committee at 254-8511 to 12, 09176201949 and e-mail eddiva2001@yahoo.com.



LONG SHADOWS

Relatives await the arrival in Zamboanga City of Filipinos expelled from Sabah as part of a continuing Malaysian crackdown on undocumented foreign workers.

REUTERS

ILLEGAL LOGGING PROBE

DENR exec signed fake log transport papers

CAGAYAN DE ORO CITY—An environment executive in Lanao del Sur is now in hot water after it was found that he signed two fake Certificates of Timber/Lumber Origin (CTLO).

CTLOs are used in the transport of logs from the cutting area to the place of destination.

Nacamora Dibaratun, community environment and natural resources officer (Cenro) of Maguing town, however, said he did not know he signed fake documents.

The discovery of Dibaratun's signature on the fake documents happened during the hearing here on seized illegally cut logs, which was conducted by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources in Northern Mindanao on Wednesday last week.

Dibaratun was invited to the hearing, along with Malik Pangandaman, the provincial environment officer of Lanao del Sur, to shed light on the widespread trafficking of illegal logs to the region from the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao.

It was the military which blew the whistle on the widespread trafficking of illegally cut logs.

Maj. Johnny Macanas, spokesperson of the Army's 4th Infantry Division, said the military was able to confiscate illegally sawn logs at least 74 times in one month.

During the early part of the hearing, Dibaratun said a set of documents covering a shipment of logs from Maguing bore his forged signature.

"Only these documents have my true signature," he said pointing to two other documents.

But Jose Reyes, city environment officer, scrutinized the two documents, which Dibaratun claimed to be authentic.

"These are fake documents," he said after looking at the series of numbers serving as codes.

Col. Rainier Cruz, commander of the Army's 9th Infantry Battalion, said most of the logs they apprehended belonged to the Maguing Rebel Returnees Cooperative.

"They did not only show fake DENR forms, the cut logs did not bear any hatchet marks that could tell us where those came from. Worst, Dibaratun signed those fake DENR certificates," Cruz said.

He said what was baffling the military was that the logs were never seized at DENR checkpoints in Lanao del Sur.

"Why did they let loose those shipments only to be apprehended in the military's checkpoints? If we did not have any checkpoint I am pretty sure those shipments could have reached their destination," Cruz said.

Pangandaman, meanwhile, said his office would start an investigation of Dibaratun and his personnel.

Pangandaman also agreed to launch an inspection of the activities of MRRC to see how far the cooperative has gone.

The co-op holds a Community-based Forest Management Agreement. *Grace Cantal-Albasin, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

Gloria appoints Moncupa head of cooperative body

MONCUPA

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo has appointed Efren Moncupa as the new chair of the Cooperative Development Authority.

In a press statement, Malacañang said Moncupa holds the rank of a secretary.

Moncupa was undersecretary for operations of the Department of Agrarian Reform and was credited with helping enforce the Bayan Anihan program initiated by former agrarian reform secretary Hernani Braganza.

Moncupa also helped establish the Farmers Bayanihan Center for Rural Development and the People's Council for Agrarian Reform and Rural Development as tools for direct grassroots participation in land reform.

Moncupa, according to the Malacañang statement, also negotiated and helped implement multi-lateral and bilateral cooperation programs for the DAR.

According to the statement, Moncupa distinguished himself as a respected leader of non-government organizations and civil society groups from 1974 until 2000.

North Luzon legislators support Cha-cha

CANDON CITY—Members of the Northern Luzon Alliance, a group of members of the House of Representatives from the three regions in Northern Luzon, are supporting moves to amend the 1987 Constitution.

"We are one for constitutional changes because we believe that these will serve the welfare of our constituents and the country," said Ilocos Sur Rep. Eric Singson, president of the 29-member alliance, which is considered an influential bloc at the House.

But Singson admitted that NLA members are divided on how Charter changes should be done.

He said he is leading a "slim majority" who are supporting Charter changes through a constituent assembly while Ilocos Norte Rep. Imee Marcos, NLA vice president for Ilocos, is leading the group supporting the constitutional convention mode.

Singson said many NLA members are supporting Charter amendments to push for a change in the form of government, one of the most contentious issues in plans to amend the Constitution.

He said changing the form of government to parliamentary would speed up legislative proceedings and save public funds.

He said the Senate and House of Representatives are spending more than P8 billion yearly for legislation, but with a unicameral legislature, expenditures would be cut by half.

Singson also said the passage of important bills would be faster through the parliamentary system compared with the existing system that calls for a bicameral legislature.

The NLA is composed of representatives from the Ilocos, Cagayan Valley and Cordillera regions. Last year, its members staged a walkout during a House plenary session to dramatize their protest over the non-release of tobacco excise tax shares of Virginia tobacco-producing provinces in the Ilocos. *Leoncio Balbin Jr., PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

Lone gunman shoots, wounds vice mayor of Isabela town

BENITO SOLIVEN, Isabela—Vice Mayor Ernesto Abu was shot and wounded by a lone gunman in his house in Barangay Centro here on Monday morning, police said.

Senior Insp. Gregorio Mendez, town police chief, said Abu suffered a bullet wound in the chest and was taken to the Esther Garcia Hospital in Cauayan City where doctors declared him to be out of danger.

Reports said the gunman shot Abu while the vice mayor was feeding his pigs in his backyard at 6 a.m.

Police have yet to establish the identity of the suspect or the motive in the attack but Abu's relatives suspected that it was related to politics.

In Nueva Ecija, a barangay captain in Carranglan town was shot and killed by a motorcycle-riding man in Barangay G.S. Rosario on Sunday.

Police identified the victim as Reynaldo de la Cruz, 42, chair of Barangay D.L. Maglanoc. He died while being taken to a clinic in that town.

Police said De la Cruz was talking to some people when the gunman, aboard a motorcycle, arrived and fired at him. Four shells of a 9mm pistol were recovered from the crime scene. *Villamor Visaya Jr., PDI Northern Luzon Bureau and Anselmo Roque, PDI Central Luzon Desk*

Search yields missing vessels

ZAMBOANGA CITY—After five days of searching, the Philippine Coast Guard said it has recovered ML Rabia, a wooden sea passenger vessel that was reported missing since Jan. 28.

Lt. Commander Epifanio Navarro, chief of the Coast Guard Western Mindanao District, said the vessel with eight crewmen and 11 passengers was found drifting in Pearl Bank, Tawi-Tawi near Mapun Island.

"We got the report from former Mapun Vice Mayor Roland Tan about the presence of ML Rabia in their area," Navarro said.

The boat, owned by Hadji Muktar Ismael, was bound for this city on Jan. 28 when it encountered rough seas and strong winds.

"The boat also encountered engine trouble while on its way to this city," Navarro said.

Meanwhile, the search for another cargo vessel, ML Parhana-2, continues. The ship, which was loaded with rootcrops and bananas, went missing on the same day as ML Rabia. It was on its way to Bongao, Tawi-Tawi. *Julie Alipala, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

Negros banks seek cell phone silence

By Alex Pal
PDI Visayas Bureau

DUMAGUETE CITY—Bankers in Negros Oriental are studying a ban on the use of cellular phones inside their premises as an additional security measure.

Rafael Rallos, outgoing president of the Negros Oriental Bankers Association (Noba), said the banks have adopted a resolution which would require people to turn off their cell phones while transacting business inside banks.

Rallos said this was prompted by an incident in one of the commercial banks in Dumaguete, where a woman who withdrew P96,000 was robbed after she stepped out of the bank premises earlier this month.

It was possible, Rallos said, that the robbers obtained a tip through text message from a companion positioned inside the bank.

"A cell phone can be used for either good or evil. In Makati, people are required to leave their cell phones with the guard. Here, we are only implementing a mild measure by asking them to turn off their cell phones," he said.

Rallos said because their resolution does not have a penal provision, they have asked the City Council to pass an ordinance.

Noba incoming president Ed Calinawagan said the move was taken amid a spate of robberies in the city lately.

"Cell phone use should be regulated because this is used by would-be holduppers, swindlers . . .," he said.

He said a growing number of people respect their request to turn cell phones off. "Should we wait until something happens before we take action?"

Calinawagan's question seemed prophetic as a Metrobank client was robbed Friday noon as she went home.

Agnes Flores, 25, of Barangay Calindagan, told police three people on board a motorcycle stopped a tricycle she was in near the old Banica Bridge and robbed her of P260,000 she had just withdrawn from the bank, a wristwatch, Nokia cell phone and other belongings.

However, the mask on one of the suspects fell, leading Flores to identify him in a police line up as Bonifacio Largo of Barangay Batinguel. His arrest was expected over the weekend.

Metrobank manager Wilkie Matiao said it was possible that the robbers could have used a cell phone in identifying their victims.

But the Noba plan failed to get the council's approval.

2 NHA execs deny link to Kintanar slay

From page A1

KINTANAR

Task Force Kintanar, Higino Equipaje, manager of NHA's commercial and industrial estates department, yesterday called up a radio station to deny any involvement in the killing of the former chief of the New People's Army.

"He didn't mention any names but he was obviously referring to us because we were the only NHA officials who had lunch with Kintanar on the day he was killed," Equipaje told the INQUIRER in a phone interview.

He identified the other NHA official as Guillermo Gudoy, general services department manager.

In a separate radio interview, Maganto criticized Equipaje for coming out in the open although he did not name him. "He's quite defensive. I didn't name him yet," Maganto told the INQUIRER later in the afternoon.

Coming to his men's defense, NHA General Manager Ed Pamintuan dared Maganto to present concrete evidence against them in court, not in the media. "Don't put innocent people in the firing line," Pamintuan said.

"Nagpapapogi lang s'ya (Maganto's just projecting a handsome image to the public)," Equipaje said. "He's making us his sacrificial lambs because he can't get the real killers."

Equipaje confirmed that he and Gudoy had lunch with Kintanar at the Kamameshi House inside the Quezon Memorial Circle in Quezon City on the day the former NPA chief was killed.

NHA security contract

But Equipaje said that it was Kintanar who had arranged the meeting to supposedly discuss his plan to "bag" the contract to provide security to NHA's housing projects in Manila and Rizal. Kintanar owned a security agency called Detective Security Associated Systems (Kindsas) Inc.

Prior to the killing, Equipaje said he had met with Kintanar on at least three occasions beginning late last year when the former rebel leader participated in a bidding for the management of NHA security.

Having failed to win the contract then, Kindsas Inc. submitted another quotation last month for the security management of NHA's projects in Vitas, Tondo, and Bosoboso, Rizal, according to Equipaje. He said the new application was on the agenda of the Kamameshi meeting.

Equipaje said Kintanar was with a certain Roel when he and Gudoy arrived at the restaurant a little after noon. A few minutes after they arrived, film director Willy Milan joined them. Milan reportedly wanted to do a movie on Kintanar's exploits in the underground movement.

Equipaje said he and Gudoy left the restaurant just minutes before members of an NPA hit squad approached Kintanar and shot him to death.

The Communist Party of the Philippines has owned up to the killing of Kintanar, who it said had been found guilty beyond reasonable doubt by a people's court of crimes such as kidnapping for ransom, bank robberies and dollar counterfeiting and of helping the military fight the NPA. The NPA is the armed wing of the CPP.

Kintanar headed the NPA when its reached its peak of 25,000 armed men in 1987. The armed strength of the NPA has since dropped to less than 12,000. Kintanar broke away from the CPP in 1992, along with others, over ideological differences with a faction loyal to Jose Ma. Sison, CPP founding chair.

'We thought we'd...

From page A1

ting wooden boxes, along with rusted Japanese bayonets.

Oliver Albonen, a farmer from Atok town and a construction worker helping in the repair of the Halsema Highway, in Barangay Caponga in this town, was the first person one day in May last year to find the bars.

Albonen said he immediately informed co-workers Lito Bumakil, Arthur Simeon, Morris Pating and Eduardo Tabildas Tomes of his find.

But when they returned that night to retrieve the treasure, they found not gold but vintage Japanese-made bombs.

"Kunami nu balitok, bomba gayam nakali mi (We thought we found gold, but we unearthed bombs instead)," Pating said in Ilocano.

The boxes were filled with square and cylindrical explosives. Pating said they dug these up and then distributed the bombs among themselves.

He said the boxes were accidentally unearthed by a backhoe used to widen the road last May.

The police were tipped off about the bombs, however, and last month they finally retrieved them.

Some of the explosives were recovered by the police from Tomes' house in a vegetable farm in Barangay Paoay in Atok, some 25 km from the area where the bombs were found.

The square bombs measured 5 x 5 x 2.5 centimeters and had a yellowish-green color. The cylinders measured 10 cm long and 2.5 cm in diameter. They were classified as belonging to the RDX (rapidly detonating explosive) variety.

On Jan. 26 and Feb. 1 this year, the five farmers decided to surrender the rest of the bombs weighing 43.5 kilograms to the Criminal Investigation and Detection Group based in Benguet. Chief Insp. Marfil Kelcho of the Tublay police said he counted 326 pieces of the square explosives.

Barangay Caponga was used by retreating Japanese soldiers as their garrison during World War II. Kelcho said this was not the first time that explosives were found in the area. Last year, he said he turned over to the Cordillera police's explosives and ordnance division in Camp Dangwa a corroded 250-kg missile that may have been dropped by warplanes in the last war. *March Fianza, contributor*

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2,000 doctors taking nursing to land US jobs

From page A1

pines in a year as doctors," he said.

"Many people ask us whether we are bothered by our conscience over this decision but let me ask you: 'Has the government ever bothered about us?'" the doctor said.

Demand for nurses in certain developed countries is fueled by the shortage of nurses and other caregivers. The United States needs an estimated 600,000 nurses between now and 2010, and Japan, 1.2 million.

Villapando warned that Negros Oriental would suffer from a shortage of medical personnel because the doctors taking up nursing "will be leaving in one-and-a-half years."

He noted that all his department heads at the Negros Oriental Provincial Hospital were already nurses.

Villapando said he alerted Health Undersecretary Mila Fernandez about the problem during a meeting in Manila late last year.

"I thought we were the only province with this problem, but when I brought it up before a gathering of provincial health officers, they all said they too were having the same problem," he said.

New York hospital

In Mindanao, some government doctors have started packing up for fatter salaries abroad.

Dr. Resuldo Malintad, provincial health officer of Davao Oriental, cited the case of his predecessor Dr. J. Antonio Tagabucba, who resigned to work in a hospital in New York.

The INQUIRER learned that another government doctor from the province had also resigned to work in New York. It was not clear whether the two doctors had taken up nursing so they could work in the United States.

Malintad said it was possible that government hospitals could become mere clinics because of the looming shortage of doctors and nurses.

"The trend is already very alarming. Many of the municipal, provincial and city health officers are now joining the exodus of our nurses and doctors to Europe and the United States," Malintad said.

At a convention of government doctors in Manila last month, many more were contemplating leaving their posts to work abroad, he said.

Malintad said those considering working abroad had even decided to take up nursing.

"The very attractive salaries and perks being dangled before Filipino doctors and nurses abroad are simply irresistible," he said.

A nurse working in a government hospital in the country earns a measly P10,000 a month while those working in the United States or in the United Kingdom could earn up to P200,000 a month, according to Malintad.

Because of the fat salaries, nurses from the provincial hospital in Mati, Davao Oriental also want to try their luck abroad.

Villapando said the problem started with the devolution of the Department of Health in 1992, which led to the death of the hospital system.

Devolution meant that provincial hospitals were left to the care of provinces while the city health offices were left to the cities. The towns took care of the municipal health offices. The Department of Health concerned itself only with specialized hospitals, according to Villapando.

As a result, the salaries of doctors were the last to be standardized.

"It's degrading for (government) doctors to get a lower salary than the janitor of the Government Service Insurance System, or of a Senior Police Officer 2," Villapando said.

He said he was hoping that the government would realize the need to look after the welfare of its doctors because the country would suffer in the end.

"If one doctor is missing, it is already a problem. If two doctors are missing, that's bad," he said.

Last year, Negros Oriental won an award for being No. 1 nationwide in terms of health service delivery. As a result, the province became a "Lakbay-Aral" site for several provinces that wanted to duplicate its award-winning inter-local health zones or the District Health Systems.

Villapando said the province might not be able to sustain this achievement if doctors left for abroad to work as nurses.

Hilots to replace doctors

In the event of a severe shortage of doctors, Villapando said the province might be forced to train "*hilots* (traditional healers)" to take the place of doctors.

Because of the situation, Malintad said government doctors were coming up with a proposal aimed at addressing the impending crisis in the government's health service.

The proposal, which is to be submitted to President Macapagal-Arroyo, seeks to bar doctors and nurses from working abroad until they had served in the country for at least two years .

"Of course, nothing can stop them from leaving, that is their basic right. But we should at least regulate the exodus or else we will face a big problem," Malintad said.

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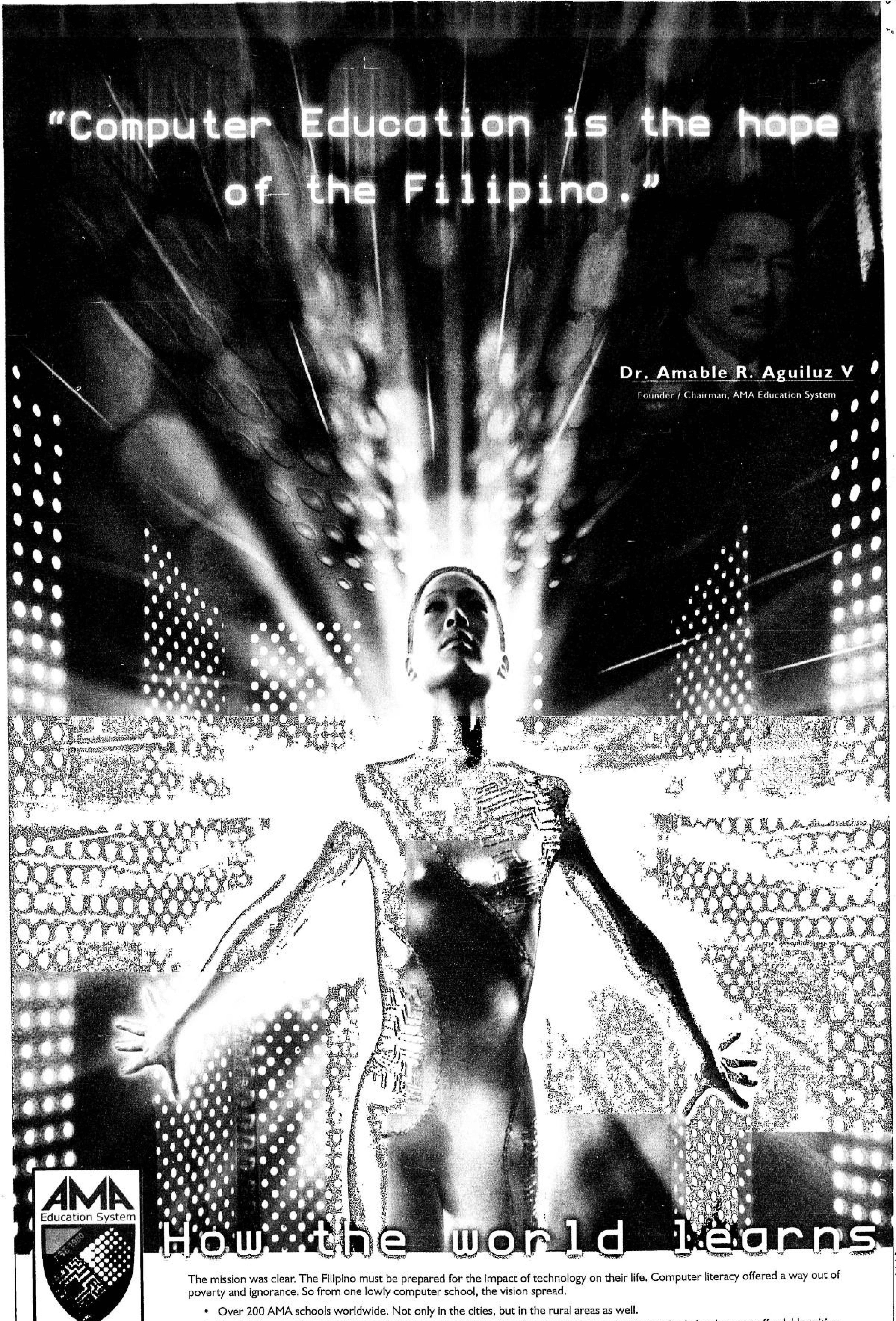
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OFWs assured of their safety by GMA

From page A1

against war or terrorism."

"The plan aims that no single OFW will get hurt, that none will get dislocated from employment, that we keep our friendly ties with Kuwait and other host governments, and that we sustain and enhance the image of our country as a preferred source of professional quality workers," the President said.

Of the Filipinos working in the Middle East, the 60,000 in Kuwait are considered most at risk from any war in Iraq because of Baghdad's threat to punish Kuwait for hosting some of the US forces.

In her speech, Ms Macapagal told the workers that she was "happy to see that you are relaxed."

"This is the message I will deliver to your loved ones in the Philippines ... that their loved ones in Kuwait are relaxed and that the Philippine government is prepared for any emergency," she said.

PRESIDENT Macapagal and Kuwaiti Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah al-Ahmed al-Sabah stand at attention while the Philippine national anthem is played upon her arrival in Kuwait City. REUTERS

The President encouraged Filipino workers to "help deliver the same message to your loved ones through your phones, text messages and your letters," and even offered to have these letters delivered to their relatives.

Security concerns

The President did not say how the government can absolutely guarantee the workers' safety and employment but she pledged to "bring the full weight of the presidency to assure our OFWs and your families that your safety and security in the event of a war is of the highest priority."

Some security experts have advised Kuwaiti residents to consider obtaining gas masks and protective clothing to guard against the possibility of an Iraqi chemical or biological attack on Kuwait.

As the workers jostled to have their picture taken with Ms Macapagal, few in the crowd seemed to mind that she had provided few answers to the most pressing questions about security in the event of a war, such as the availability of gas masks.

"We need gas masks. Where do we get them? That's the question," said electrician Jess Camacho.

"I want to ask about gas masks. What are we going to do?" Evhoie Macanlalay, who works in a beautician's shop, said before the President spoke. Afterward she said: "We feel great about seeing her."

"She has been a morale booster," said computer technician Chito Santos. But he acknowledged that confusion persisted in the community about how to get hold of gas masks, most of which are beyond the means of Asian guest workers who typically earn up to only $250 a month.

"We still want to know whether the Kuwaiti government or the Philippine government will provide them or whether we will have to get our own," he said. "I heard some types don't work when you need them and it depends on where it's made as to whether it's going to function at all."

Middle East Preparedness Team chief Roy Cimatu later told Reuters he believed gas masks would be handed out to all residents of Kuwait by the Kuwaiti government.

Kuwaiti authorities themselves have said only that it would be desirable for everyone to be protected and indicated that the government would subsidize the purchase of gas masks.

The President said the government had set aside P1 billion for use in any emergency and said Cimatu would stay behind in the small, oil-rich country after she leaves to fine-tune the emergency plan.

No politics

Evading talk of the frenzied diplomatic and military preparations being undertaken by the United States against Iraq, the President said her visit to Kuwait was "a mission of peace and a journey of hope."

"I am not here to discuss politics or military alliances," Ms Macapagal told workers.

In an interview with the Middle East Bureau of ABS-CBN, President Macapagal declined to answer a question about the country's relations with Iraq.

"I don't want to mix talk of diplomatic relations with my visit," she said.

In her "regional command conference" with Philippine ambassadors and labor attachés posted in the Middle East, the President focused on two themes. He told the envoys to protect Filipino workers and to help guard against terrorism.

"It has always been the policy of our government that the safety and welfare of our overseas workers in this region is our first priority," President Macapagal said in a brief speech.

She also reminded the officials that the Philippines and Kuwait were "part of the international coalition against terrorism and we consider it a joint responsibility to fight terror within our respective territories."

Hence, "you diplomats and labor officials all over the Middle East must try to do our share in guarding against terrorism just like our home-based officials are doing their share in the Philippines," Ms Macapagal said.

"Our nation and I will reflect on the best course of action that will protect our overseas workers, the integrity of our nation and our obligation to future generations to live in a world free from terror and oppression," she also said.

"We must all realize that terrorism is a universal threat and whether it is aimed at targets here in the Middle East or on Southeast Asia or in Mindanao, it is our duty to help in guarding against this threat and to expose its militant cells," Ms Macapagal said.

Excited crowd

Ms Macapagal took no questions but signed dozens of autographs after her speech when she was mobbed at a huge buffet meal by workers elated about meeting the head of state.

Aside from assuring them of their safety and continued employment, Ms Macapagal also told them that the absentee voting bill, which would allow OFWs to cast their votes, would become law "very soon, maybe even next week."

At these words, the workers applauded vigorously.

Ms Macapagal also said that she would express her appreciation to Kuwaiti emir Shiek Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah for his concern for Filipino workers.

The President likewise said that she, the emir and other Kuwaiti officials would review the steps "we have in place in case—God forbids—Filipinos are put in harm's way and need to be removed from the region."

"I've always said that the protection of our OFWs all over the world occupies the highest priority in my administration," President Macapagal said.

The Kuwaiti emir had elevated her working visit to an official state visit and accorded her full state honors.

Foreign Secretary Blas Ople said the meeting with the emir went well.

"The emir of Kuwait, who is a good friend of our country, has given firm assurance that whatever the Kuwaiti government will do for its nationals in the event of war, it will also do for the Filipino nationals," Ople said.

"Although the President's trip is a single country visit, it has considerably raised the morale of the Filipinos in the whole Middle East," Ople said in a news conference. *With reports from Norman Bordadora; Reuters, AP, AFP*

Tancangco hurdles impeach complaint

LAWMAKERS dismissed last night the impeachment complaint against Elections Commissioner Luzviminda Tancangco.

Voting 69-57, the House voted to affirm the House justice committee report that had sought to dismiss the impeachment complaint against Tancangco.

With only 57 congressmen voting to junk the House justice committee report, the vote was 16 shy of the 73 votes needed to overturn the committee report.

"It was close," said Bacolod Rep. Monico Puentevella, who had led 55 congressmen in endorsing the Tancangco complaint filed by the People vs Tancangco Movement.

Namfrel chair Jose Concepcion, who was among the complainants who filed the case against Tancangco and who attended the voting last night, said that had the voting taken place today he was sure they would have gotten 73 congressmen to vote against the committee report.

Congressmen who voted to junk the complaint said they did so because they felt Tancangco should have not been singled out since decisions at the Comelec were done collegially.

They also were angered by the pressure brought to bear on them by civil society groups who wanted them to vote against Tancangco.

Tancangco was accused of graft and corruption, betrayal of the public trust and culpable violation of the Constitution stemming from her performance at the Comelec. *Christine O. Avendaño*

Last plane out for Filipino nurses

By Blanche S. Rivera

IF THE UNITED States attacks Iraq, Filipino nurses will be among the last ones to be moved out of Kuwait, government officials said yesterday.

Labor Undersecretary Manuel Imson said Kuwait's Ministry of Health has requested the government's Middle East Preparedness Team to allow Filipino health workers to stay in the territory in the event of war.

Imson noted that the quality of service of Filipino health workers had been lauded abroad and would be "badly needed" if Kuwait were to find itself caught in renewed hostilities.

In a TV interview, special envoy to the Middle East Roy Cimatu said it was "the policy of the Kuwaiti government" to seek the services of foreign health workers in case of a crisis.

"There is no increase in salary, but many of the Filipinos there are willing to help and serve," Cimatu said in an interview with the ABS-CBN Middle East bureau.

As of October last year, the country had 890 health workers in Kuwait, 746 of whom are nurses, according to records of the Philippine Overseas Employment Administration.

Cimatu's team, which includes labor and foreign affairs officials, met with Kuwaiti authorities and Filipino communities in their second visit to Kuwait three weeks ago.

The team visited the Jara hospital on the northern border of Kuwait and Iraq only last month. It employs around 200 Filipino workers.

Labor information officer Nicon Fameronag, who is also with the team, noted that most of the veteran Filipino nurses in Jara hospital were not alarmed by news of an impending war.

Many of them were already serving there during the Gulf War in 1991, he added. Only the younger workers were scared because of the "sensational reporting" on the looming attacks, he said.

"The bottom line is for us to make sure that they are safe," Imson told the INQUIRER in a phone interview yesterday.

"Nobody can force them to stay. When it comes to their decision to move, they should not be prevented, but they have to inform their employer," Imson said.

Imson also stressed that the request by the Kuwaiti government was "not a formal agreement" and will not stop the team from relocating Filipino health workers if the need arises.

The government has readied a vast farmland in Nuwaisib to accommodate Filipinos relocated from the city.

There are around 60,000 overseas Filipino workers in Kuwait, 6,000 of whom live in areas near the Iraqi border.

German dove stabs American hawk over Iraq

From page A1

stab wounds in the lower back and was brought to the nearby Badian District Hospital. He was later moved to the Cebu Doctors Hospital here.

Flynn was discharged from the hospital yesterday. A nurse said Flynn was allowed to go home because his injuries were minor.

Flynn and Oesterle were both spending their vacations at the Panagsama Beach Resort in Barangay Basdiot, Moalboal.

They met at the resort's Lloyds Videoke Bar early Friday and started drinking. At about 4 a.m., the two got drunk and started discussing the Iraq war.

"It was just a drinking session. We were discussing politics and then we started to fight," Oesterle told the INQUIRER.

The German said he was opposed to the US plan to attack Iraq because it would affect thousands of innocent people. But Flynn got mad because he was in favor of the plan, Oesterle said.

"He just grabbed me by my neck, by my throat," he said. The German said he took out his Swiss knife and stabbed the American.

Now sober, Oesterle said he felt sorry for the incident. He even appeared to be reluctant to elaborate on what happened.

He said he was hoping to settle the matter with Flynn. "We will solve the problem. This is not a big problem and I will apologize to him."

But Oesterle said both of them were at fault because they were drunk at that time. He added that he was willing to reimburse Flynn for his hospital expenses.

When the INQUIRER reached Oesterle by telephone at the Moalboal police station, the German was waiting for Flynn to visit him so they could settle the problem.

GERMAN national Frank Oesterle tries to cover his face from photographers at the Moalboal town jail. Police arrested him after he stabbed American John Flynn following a heated argument over US plans to attack Iraq. ALLAN DEFENSOR

Yesterday, police filed charges of frustrated murder against the German with the Moalboal Municipal Circuit Trial Court.

Oesterle said the incident was a "nightmare" for him because this was the first time he got into trouble.

He was also worried that his sick mother in Germany might learn about what happened to him. "I'm sure she will not survive if she knew about this," he said.

Oesterle usually comes to Cebu every year to bask on its beaches. He arrived in the Philippines in mid-January on his 13th visit.

He said he planned to leave as soon as he settled his problem.

500,000 Filipinos may lose jobs in Saudi

From page A1

reduction of the number of foreign workers and their family members until the desert kingdom's ultimate goal is achieved in early 2013.

The ruling will allow Saudi authorities to review the ceiling, policies and measures once every two years.

If implemented, the decision would slash the number of foreigners in Saudi Arabia to around four million people, which means that if new recruitment is totally suspended, between two and three million foreigners will have to leave over the next 10 years.

The quota system will hit hardest those nationals from India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Egypt, Sudan and Syria, as well as the Philippines, whose numbers exceed the required 10 percent—or about 400,000.

Economic pressures

The decision seems to have been driven by economic pressures.

Saudi Arabia sits on a quarter of the world's proven oil reserves, but its per capita income dropped from $26,000 in 1981 to less than $7,000 in 2001.

Unemployment among Saudi males is estimated at more than 20 percent, while less than 10 percent of women of working age are actually employed.

In 1995, a law was issued requiring private businesses employing more than 20 people to increase the number of Saudi nationals by 5 percent of the workforce every year. The current required rate is 30 percent.

The domestic economy has been hampered by an average annual growth rate of 1.8 percent in the past two decades, well below the population growth rate of 3.5 percent.

The kingdom has managed a budget surplus only once in the past 20 years: $6.7 billion in 2000 when both oil prices and production soared sharply.

The size of the overall workforce in Saudi Arabia was 7.2 million in 2000, about 6.3 million of whom worked in the private sector.

Foreign workers numbered about four million, with 3.9 million of them in the private sector and the rest in the government which employs 900,000 people. Over 90 percent of government workers are Saudis. *AFP*

PCPO-MALACAÑANG

PRESIDENT Macapagal speaks to the Filipino community at the Bayan Palace in Kuwait City.

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 4, 2003

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SPORTS

Editor Al S. Mendoza ● Assistant Editor Edwin M. Villanueva

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(In exact order)

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MEGALOTTO 6/45

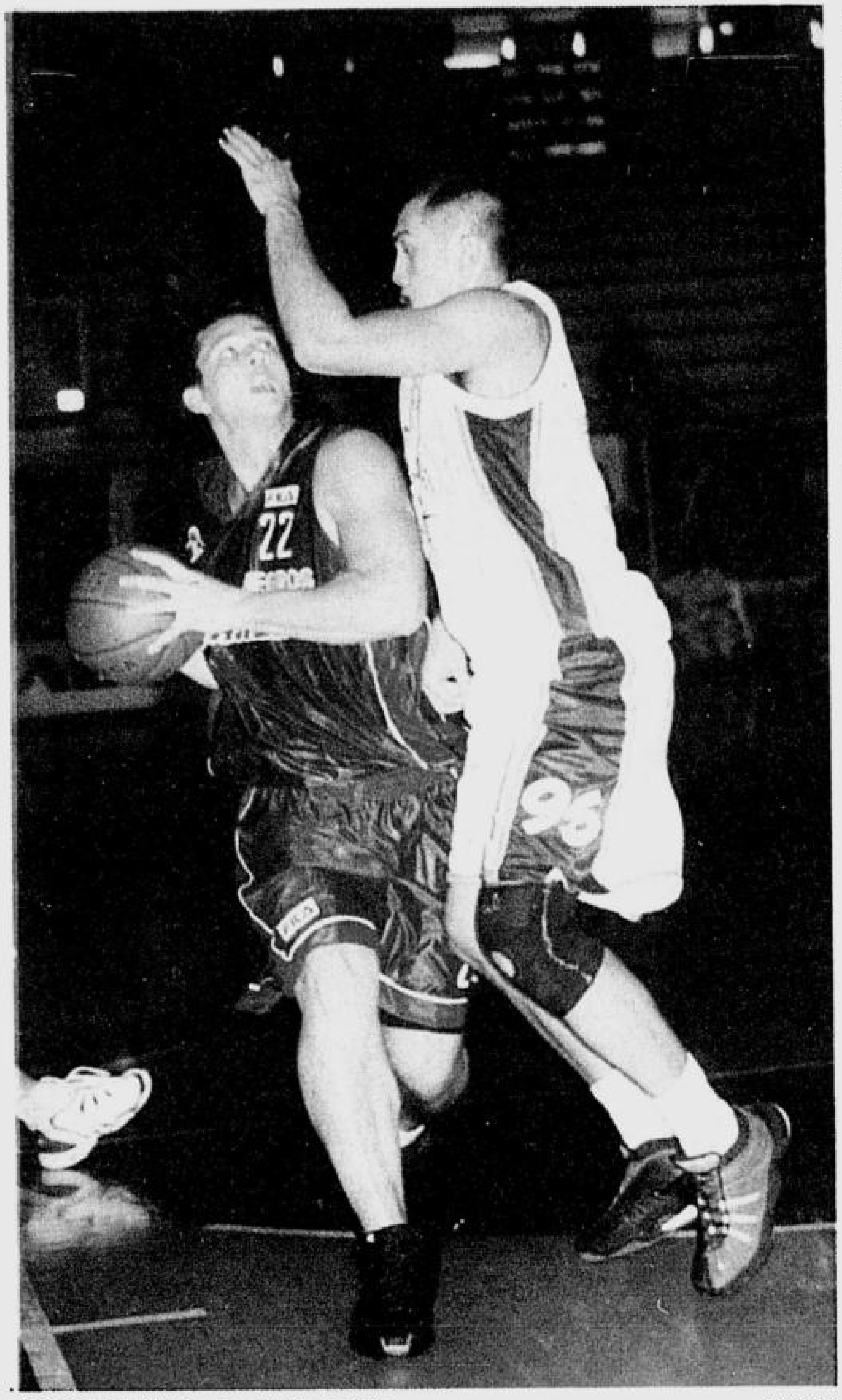
1 3 21 29 38 42

King picks Serena, Venus

NEW YORK--US Fed Cup captain Billie Jean King on Sunday named Serena and enus Williams, the world's No 1 and No 2 players, to the squad that will take on he Czech Republic in the first round from April 26 to 27 in Boston, Massachusets. ast year, the Americans were upset by Austria in the first round and Jennifer apriati, then the top player in the world, was kicked off the team after she broke eam rules and had a shouting match with King. AFP

THREE YEARS

FedEx offers ₱12-M deal to Ferriols



FERRIOLS (left) drives hard to the basket. PDI PHOTO

By June Navarro

AIR21-FEDEX is saving the best rookie deal of the season for last.

John Ferriols, picked 12th overall during the PBA rookie draft last month, could yet end up as the wealthiest rookie as the Express management dangled an offer that could make him at least P12 million richer in three years.

Air21-FedEx president Lito Alvarez said the initial offer to Ferriols is worth only P6.6 million spread over three years.

But Alvarez said the 1998 MVP of the now-defunct MBA is entitled to a significant raise every conference depending on his performance.

"And should Ferriols fare competitively, his salary, excluding the perks and the bonuses, could reach over P12 million," said Alvarez, who acts as governor for the Bert Lina-owned franchise in the PBA board.

With that, Ferriols could even beat the financial package of all the first-round draft picks.

So far, Shell's Eddie Laure owns the most lucrative deal after signing a three-year pact worth P11.4 million.

Romel Adducul, selected second overall, got P12.7 million from Barangay Ginebra spread over four years.

"It's a package far better than what the first-rounders got," said Alvarez.

Dondon Monteverde, Ferriols' manager, confirmed the Express offer, saying the package that Ferriols would receive includes a Mail and More franchise.

Monteverde added the former University of San Jose-Recoletos stalwart would sign up anytime this week.

Ferriols stands to receive P150,000 a month on his first year. But the 6-foot-4 power forward could automatically get a 50 percent increase or P225,000 if he fares cofnpetitively in the All-Filipino conference. The 2003 PBA season will begin on Feb. 23 featuring the All-Filipino conference.

"I'm really satisfied with what FedEx has offered. On my rookie year, I will most likely play as back-up to Jerry Codinera and concentrate more on defense," said the 28-year-old Ferriols.

Ferriols will join Yancy De Ocampo, Ryan Bernardo, Omanzie Rodriguez and Codinera on the Express frontline while Roger Yap, Renren Ritualo, Vergel Meneses and Wynne Arboleda take care of the backcourt.

Mayor tops Peace chess

DENTIST Jenny Mayor dethroned defending champion Dennis San Juan with a come-from-behind victory in the finals of the 2002 Philippine Executive Active Chess Express or PEACE 2002 at the Land Bank Plaza auditorium recently.

Mayor, a four-time grand prix topnotcher and champion in 1999, dropped his first game but won the next two in the best-of-three match for the Success section title.

Engineer Gunnar Abelido of Line Seiki Phils., meanwhile, disposed of Cyrus Atienza of Land Bank in the finals, 2-0, to annex the title in the Prosperity section.

PEACE 2002 was organized by the Active Chess Center of Asia (ACCA) with the support of Belgosa Media Systems and Land Bank.

The event was graced by Ambassador Paul Moe of the Royal Norwegian Embassy. He gave an inspirational message and played a game against host Land Bank president Margarito Teves. The game ended in a draw.

En route to the finals, Mayor rolled past quarterfinalist Ricky Navalta of Diwa Learning Systems and semifinalist Ryan Ruiz of Globe Telecom with 2-0 scores. On the other hand, Abelido eliminated Rey Paul Hechanova of Aura College, 2-0 and Jose Matutino of Cebu Pacific, 2-1, in the quarterfinals and semifinals, respectively.

San Juan made it to the finals with victories over lawyer Quirino Sagario and engineer Robert Arellano; while Atienza outclassed Ronald Donasco of Nagase Phils. and Dept. of Education's Ramil Acosta.

Valley hosts golf tourney

THE DOWN Syndrome Association of the Philippines has announced the holding of its First DSAPI Golf Cup this month as part of its celebration of Down Syndrome Consciousness Month.

Organizing committee chair Antonio Pasia said the golfest has been scheduled Feb. 7 at the Valley Golf and Country Club Executive Course in Antipolo. Tee-off time is from 6 a.m. to 8 a.m.

The tournament is one of several activities lined up for the celebration of Down Syndrome Consciousness month which aims to initiate, develop, promote, encourage and support programs and projects concerning Down Syndrome.

DSAPI chair Antonio Pasia said that they are pleased with the proclamation of February as Down Syndrome Consciousness Month and the golf tourney with the theme "Tee-up for Downs" is the start of a month long celebration that includes a Walk for a Cause project on Feb. 5.

Albay ready for tilt

ALBAY Gov. Al Francis Bichara has set the provincial machinery in motion for the successful staging of the 57th National inter-collegiate and secondary basketball championships from Feb. 24-March 2.

Bichara has instructed the appropriate agencies to coordinate with each other because he believes the event will be able to showcase the province as a tourist destination and site of big sports events.

An estimated 700 athletes and sports officials, excluding guests, are expected to converge in Albay for the holding of the country's premiere cage event for students.

"If we will be able to please our visitors, they will be our best advertisers for they can speak well of the beauty and charm of Albay," said Bichara, who readily accepted the offer of the Basketball Association of the Philippines to host the annual tournament at the Albay Astrodome and other venues.

Provincial information officer and provincial sports coordinator Leonardo Flores said he's been coordinating with the local governments and other agencies to ensure the smooth running of the national students.

Bicol BAP regional director Julian Lavadia Jr., also an incumbent councilor of Naga City, said the holding of the national students in Albay is in line with the BAP's thrust for grassroots development.

BAP Albay provincial director Henry Jacob, also an incumbent councilor of Daraga this province, disclosed that the local schools which may represent the Bicol region are Divine Word College, Aquinas University, St. Agnes Academy and Bicol College.

Meanwhile, BAP secretary general Graham Lim said the BAP will hold its national congress on Feb. 23 at the Governor's Palace.

Roy Luarca

CEBU COUNTRY CLUB

Buhain hitting ceremonial ball of Southern Ladies

CEBU CITY–Chair Eric Buhain of the Philippine Sports Commission will hit the ceremonial ball at 4:30 p.m. today (Tuesday) to signify the start of the Southern Ladies Open at the Cebu Country Club here.

He will be joined in the occasion by Rod Feliciano, president of the organizing National Golf Association of the Philippines, Cebu CC president Bugs Unchuan and Cebu CC Ladies Chapter president Rosebud Sala, NGAP treasurer/Ladies Committee chair Alice Ll. Andrada and Dr. Suga Sotto-Yuvienco.

Yuvienco, a pioneer of the Southern Ladies that began in 1964, won the event in 1982.

The tournament will begin tomorrow, with nearly a hundred participants from all over the archipelago in attendance, including national players like Heidi Chua, Carmelette Villaroman, Aileen Rose Yao, Lucy Landicho, Lora Roberto, Tracy Locsin and Lina de Guzman, the winner last year in Cagayan de Oro's nearby Del Monte.

De Guzman will remain a force to reckon with but Chua is the prohibitive favorite due to her earlier back-to-back victories in the Philippine Ladies Open at Manila Golf Club and the DHL-NGAP Open at Canlubang.

"It's going to be a tough battle for the championship crown," said Andrada. "But equally interesting would be the competition in the lower divisions like Classes A, B,C and D where our lady golfers will be truly dishing out their wares as this tournament commands so much prestige year in and year out."

BUHAIN

ANDRADA

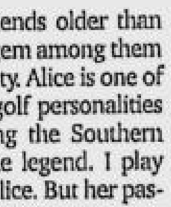
Many of the division winners last year are back to defend their crowns in this historic Ruby Celebration sponsored by PAL (official carrier), Philippine Sports Commission, DHL Worldwide Express/WWW Express, Marriot Hotel-Cebu, Petron, San Miguel Corp., Smart Communications, Mitsubishi Motors Philippines, Mizuno, Hans Brumann, WG&A Super Ferry, Directories Philippines Inc., Nike, Hidden Spring and Perrier and Gopez Corporation.

Venice Godio was last year's Class A winner, Cheryl Chua Class B, Marissa Romano Class C and Sheila Vanessa Kho Class D.

Among the clubs represented in the series ending on Friday include Alabang, Wack Wack, Southwoods, Navy, Canlubang, Aguinaldo, Orchard, Cebu CC, Bacolod, Pueblo de Oro, Negros OGCC and Iligan. ASM

When old is gold

SPECTATOR



Al S. Mendoza

I HAVE young friends, old friends. But mostly, old friends. I don't know. Since I was small, I have always been fascinated by old people. I find them friendlier than the younger ones. My love for them extends to my drawings; as a kid, I drew old men and put beards on them. The old women in the canvas of my youth were always with canes in hand.

I was with my granny all the time each time I came to Manila for the summer vacation. I would tag along with her to Quiapo for the Mass, to Central Market on Zurbaran for fruits and T-shirts, or to Trabajo in Sampaloc for a visit with her friends. When she went to sell empty bottles of medicines in Project 2, I would be with her. I cried a lot when it was time for me to go back home to Mangatarem, Pangasinan, when the next school year was on.

To be sure, I had many friends of my age; they were mostly our neighbors and my classmates. But I would always seek the company of people older than me.

The town's parish priest and his assistants had been my friends. One priest whom I loved being with was Fr. Marinas. In my high school days, we always played table tennis at the convent Saturday mornings and afternoons. We always played for fun and sometimes, for gin. After my high school graduation, we parted ways. I haven't seen him, nor heard from him, since.

Ceferino "Pino" Tengasantos, a next-door neighbor, was almost 15 years my senior. But he loved playing marbles with me and boys my age. He went spider-hunting with us early in the morning, or even at dusk.

"You eat spider and you'll be good at finding the best fighting spiders in the world," he'd tell us.

If you were the gullible type, you'd take heed as he fired his jokes with all the seriousness of a Wyatt Earp.

He came with us to the river for a swim. Maybe because he was an only son and he yearned for the company of brothers he never had?

It was from Pino that I learned how to drink. When my parents learned about it, they distanced me away from Pino; they treated Pino like the bubonic plague. Yet, in one graduation of mine for which I'd be pinned my usual ribbon of honors, I sought out Pino to do the honors on stage.

Pino drank heavily in those days that times were many when, inebriated by too much intake of beer-gin-coke, he would flung their jar of drinking water onto our backyard in a fit of joy. He'd done that a lot of times.

"He was legendary for that," Boni Sison would recall, laughing with his heart's content each time he says that.

When he got drunk-usually it was in the afternoon-Pino was the talk of the town. He'd be the undisputed "bida" in the town plaza; nobody dared to cross his path or he'd be seeing stars. For Pino, like Wyatt Earp his idol, was also a quick draw.

But time has a way of stilling our ways.

Today, Pino is a completely changed person. The nearly three decades of living in Honolulu, with three grown-up children and a beautiful wife almost 12 years his junior, must have tempered his will, spirits.

One time when he came home for a vacation, Pino (we call each other Kanor for reasons I have yet to unravel) and I went one-on-one in a bar: I drank whisky up to 4 in the morning, he only a bottle of Sprite. Suddenly, he had completely stopped drinking.

"No, I am not ill," he said. "I just decided it's time to call it quits."

Pino just hit town. He's drinking again.

"But only occasionally and on very special occasions only," he said. "Such as the nights I am with you, Kanor."

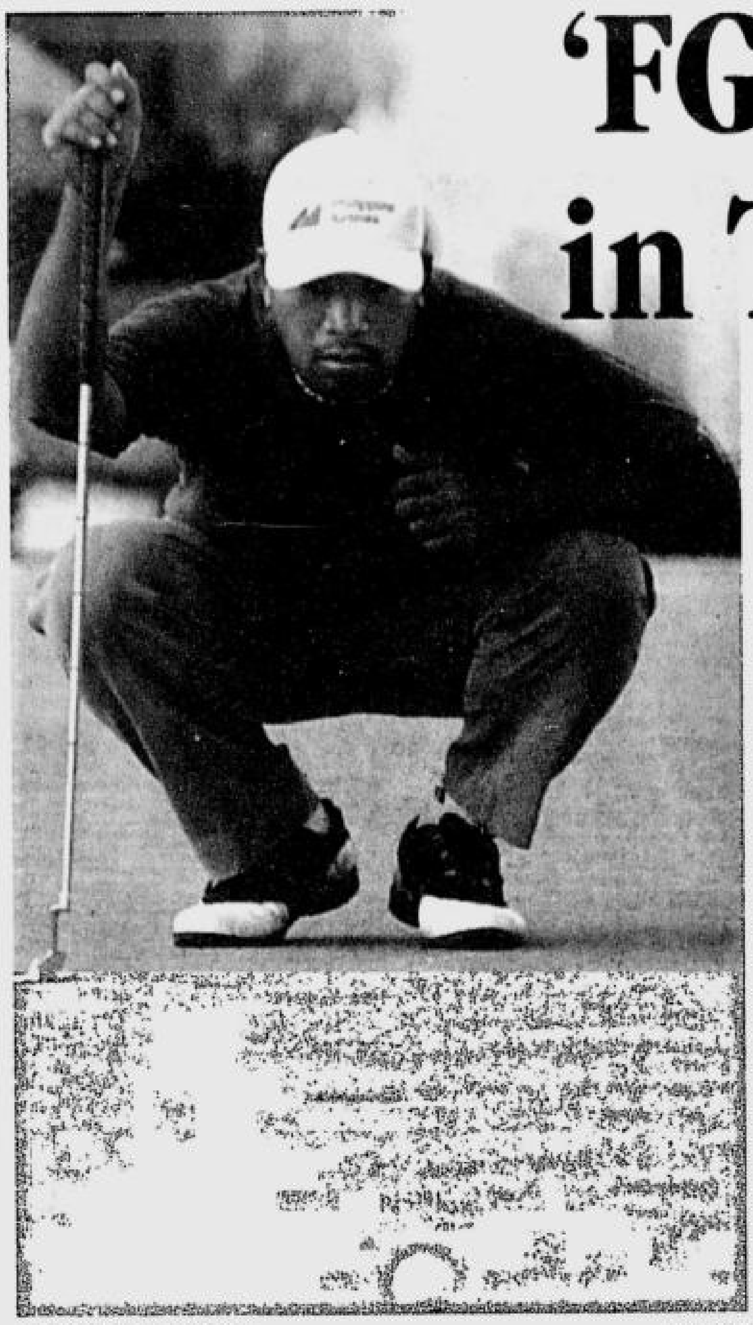
It was the farewell dinner on Saturday I had hosted at Kamayan West. As we parted ways, he said: "Keep on punchin' Kanor. See you around."

I am not young anymore by my children's yardstick of what's young. For one, I now have a lot of friends much younger than me; I don't know if they also enjoy my company the way I do with the older generation. For another, I now have three grand children-two boys and one girl.

But my faith in keeping friends older than me remains as fiery as ever. A gem among them is Alice Ll. Andrada of Iligan City. Alice is one of the country's most enduring golf personalities whose yearly effort at keeping the Southern Ladies Open alive has become legend. I play golf with as much passion as Alice. But her passion to keep the Southern Ladies going is something that borders on the phenomenal.

Here's to Alice, the wonderland of women's golf in the country.

Here's to the old folk, who will always be as good as old gold.



CASAS: Big headache. PDI PHOTO

'FG' resumes in Tagaytay

Casas, Pucay head field

CASSIUS Casas, Mars Pucay and Benjie Magada eye a third-leg victory when the First Gentleman's Professional Golf Circuit presented by San Miguel Beer resumes today at the picturesque Tagaytay Midlands course.

After a memorable three weeks of fireworks in Mindanao where several scoring records were set, another exciting four days are in store as the country's touring pros play a tough course hosting a full professional event for the first time with Casas, Pucay and Magada all fired up to shoot for No. 3.

It will be a battle with the winds and greens with such glass-like texture more than anything else at Midlands, factors which may force the best of the pack to leave their big-head drivers behind and put the irons to good use.

The Midlands stop will serve as the 10th leg of the revived tour bankrolled by First Gentleman Mike Arroyo and San Miguel Beer and organized by the Federation of Golf Clubs Philippines Inc., kicking off the final Luzon stretch.

Most of the pros got back from their southern sojourn via a courtesy ride on board official carrier WG&A Super Ferry where they got the chance to relax their tired and aching muscles.

Tagaytay Midlands being a neutral ground will certainly leave the chase for the P100,000 wide open. And for the other top guns still searching for their first victory like Danny Zarate, Rodrigo Cuello and Robert Pactolerin, it's high time for a counter strike.

Casas and Pucay remain the biggest headaches for everybody, especially after both dominated the Mindanao swing of the circuit. Pucay pulled off back-to-back wins at the expense of his World Cup teammate Casas at Rancho Palos Verdes and Pueblo del Oro. But the latter ended his anguish by surviving another Davaoeño Elmer Salvador in a marathon six-hole sudden-death playoff last week in Del Monte.

Pucay didn't play too well in Del Monte although he kept the Order of Merit leadership despite finishing just tied for ninth.

Also in the roster are Canlubang leg winner Richard Sinfuego, who joined the Del Monte playoff but didn't last too long, and rookie pro Angelo Que, who won the Bacolod stage but has not played in the last three tournaments.

Another returnee is rookie Cookie La'O who finished second to Antonio Lascuna when the Tour opened at Sta. Elena but was forced to miss the next eight events due to illness.

From the Midlands, the tour proceeds to the Orchard and Southwoods for the final two legs.

Metro chess tourney listing centers bared

REGISTRATION for the Metropolitan Chess Association Amateur League–one of the biggest local team competitions in the country–is now in full swing at the following centers: MCC Parañaque office, former fishing area in Greenhills Shopping Center (GSC) and at Rizal Memorial Sports Complex just across Harrison Plaza in Malate, Manila.

More than P150,000 is at stake in this two-day chessfest which will be held on Feb. 22-23 at the Lotus Garden Hotel in Malate, Manila.

The league is a nine-round Swiss team competition for amateur members of various chess associations and clubs in the private and government entities, schools and cities around the country. It offers a top prize of P50,000 plus trophy to the champion; P30,000 2nd placer; P20,000-3rd; P15,000-4th; P10,000-5th; P7,000-6th and P5,000 each for 7-10th places. Top board performers will also receive cash prizes.

Deadline for registration is until Feb. 19. The team captains' meeting has been set on Feb. 17 at GSC. For further dtails and requests for invitations, please call 826-8560, 0918-939-3702 and 0916-852-1069.

Weir wins Hope Classic

LA QUINTA, California—Mike Weir, who stayed steady down the stretch while Jay Haas and Tim Herron shot themselves into trouble, won the Bob Hope Classic.

Weir shot a closing 5-under par 67 Sunday to finish at 30-under 330 and two strokes in front of Haas, who was tied for the lead until he hit into the water in front of the 18th green.

It was the second year in a row Haas, the 1988 Hope champion, held the lead only to lose it late in the final round, this time despite shooting a 69.

Herron, four shots ahead of Weir and Haas heading into the final round of the five-day tournament, struggled to a 75 that that included a quadruple bogey on No. 16.

He finished tied for third at 25 under with Chris DiMarco, who shot 70. *AP*

Mandaluyong derby on today

A TOTAL of 56 quality and exciting fights from start to finish are on tap when big-time cockers clash in the "4th Ucap Bumble Bee Balbina/Pandor Magic 7-Cock Derby" at the Mandaluyong Coliseum today.

Sponsors are Sagupaan Hammer Dewormer, Sagupaan Mite Free, Complexor 3000 and Lakpue Drug Inc.

Sabong idol Patrick Antonio, current leader in the Ucap Cocker of the Year 2003 race with 18 points, tries to solidy his hold of the lead by fielding derby winners in the recent World Slasher Cup and Ucap International 9-Cock Derby.

Closely pursuing Antonio are John Capinpin of Negros (J-Cap Mad AT RBA, 17); OPMI president Vic Yu (King Boxer I, 16.5); Jet Fernando (JSF GP, 16.5); Mauro Prieto of Palawan (Anito, 14.5) and Ucap president Raymond Velayo (Arnis Master I, 13).

Also invited by derby hosts are former ambassador Danding Cojuangco and Maj. Bobby Doromal. Joining them are bigshots like two-time international champion Jun Marasigan of Batangas, Diaz brothers of Iloilo, Esting Teopaco of Tarlac, Gerry Ramos of Las Piñas, Mayor Jessie Viceo of Bulacan, Otic Geroso of Negros, Mayor Charlie Cojuangco, Dave Paras of Marikina, Sandy Javier of Batangas, among others.

For inquiries, please contact 531-4003, 531-4005, 534-4110 and 535-2341.

Roligon 5-cock meet gets going

MORE than 100 fights are in store for aficionados today as Roligon Mega Cockpit presents the "13th Anniversary 5-Cock Derby," a gathering of well-known provincial derby champions and Metro Manila's favorite derbyists.

Set at 5 p.m. today is the 2-cock elimination. The finals (3-cock) is on Thursday, Feb. 6.

Hosted and promoted by Rolly Ligon, the derby is being sponsored by Thunderbird Platinum High Protein Conditioning Pellets and Ninja Gamefowl Feeds.

Aside from the whopping guaranteed prize of P1 million awaiting the winners, the champion with the fastest winning time will also get a brand-new Honda motorcycle or its cash equivalent of P50,000. Each participant will receive an anniversary gift from Ligon.

Early favorites include the entries of Mayor Nene Aguilar and Gerry Ramos, lawyer Romero Yu, Dicky Lim, Pol Estrellado, Dong Lacson, Dennis del Rosario, Emil Chua, California-based Emitt San Juan, Gov. Ito Ynares, Bobby Wong, James Chiongbian, Lito Alcantara, Francis Lumunsad, Iking and Jimmyton Araneta, Tony Lasala, William Go and Benjie Lim, among others.

Meanwhile, Mega Promotions announced that new manager Roming Vergara will assist in hackfights, *ulutan* and derbies at Roligon. For other details, please contact 833-2275 and 833-1638.

Chairman's Cup at MGC set Feb. 28

THE SUBDIVISION and Housing Developers Association Inc., the country's largest and leading organization of subdivision and housing developers, will hold a golf tournament dubbed ``Chairman's Cup 2003."

The event will assemble major players in housing and urban development both from the government and the private sector. It will be held at the Manilf Golf and Country Club on Feb. 28.

The golf tournament will also serve as a way of recognizing the efforts of Housing and Urban Development Coordinating Council chair Michael Defensor toward the improvement in shelter delivery and revitalization of the housing sector.

SPORTSTV

Compiled by L. Mangulat

BASKETBALL: 16th ABC Championship for Junior Women 2002, 10 a.m., Star Sports

2002 Reebok Cross Straits Basketball Championships, 5 p.m., ESPN

AMERICAN FOOTBALL: NFL Blast, 8:30 a.m., ESPN

POOL: Mosconi Cup 2002, 11 a.m. and 7 p.m. (r), ESPN

Rack 'Em Up 2, 1:30 p.m. and 9 p.m. (r), Star Sports

TENNIS: The Collins Cup, 11:30 a.m., Star Sports

CYCLING: Tour of Langkawi, 2:30 p.m., Star Sports

ICE SKATING: NHK Trophy 2002, 4 p.m., Star Sports

SOCCER: Spanish Football League, 7 a.m. and 7 p.m. (r), Star Sports

Western Union World Football, 8 a.m. (r), ESPN

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FEBRUARY 02, 2003

SENIOR MEN'S DIVISION
FIN: (Gold) Roberto Cruz (Tip Top Shape); (Silver) Angelito Ong (Phil. Army); (Bronze) Terence Botejo (Laguna) & Gerald Gregorio (UST)
FLY: (Gold) Tshomlee Go (Phil. Air Force); (Silver) Eilen Cudal (Phil. Air Force); (Bronze) Gilbert Jamena (Las Piñas) & Anthony Ong (Phil. Army)
BANTAM: (Gold) Manuel Rivero Jr. (CSB); (Silver) Romel Espiritu (UP); (Bronze) Glenn Lava (UC Cebu) & Ermin Janaras (TBB)
FEATHER: (Gold) Jefferthom Go (Phil. Navy); (Silver) Rodolfo Valenzuela Jr. (PAF); (Bronze) George Lou Rublo (Zamboanga) & Arnold Valenzuela (PAF)
LIGHT: (Gold) Alexander Briones (UST); (Silver) Nino Bonotan (Rizal); (Bronze) Lawrence Pista (DTTC) & Joselito Gonzales (San Fernando)
WELTER: (Gold) Donald Geisler III (Central Gym); (Silver) ErnestoJuan Mendoza II (UST); (Bronze) Butch De Vera (Ilocos Norte) & Israel Bermudez (PAF)
MIDDLE: (Gold) Dindo Simpao (UST); (Silver) Willie Ngo (PAF); (Bronze) Marlon Jerald Paugirag (DLSU) & Jhon Tonilos (Toyota)
HEAVY: (Gold) Dax Morfe (Team Nueva Ecija); (Silver) Mic Alejandrino (DLSU); (Bronze) Kenneth Santos (Phil. Navy) & Alessandro Lubiano (Ateneo)

JUNIOR MEN'S DIVISION
FIN: (Gold) Sandy Camino (Rizal); (Silver) Jude Gonzaga (NTU Tigers-Talisay); (Bronze) Vincent Albert Villegas (AIDA) & Glenn Allan Alcantara (SSA)
FLY: (Gold) John Paul Lizardo (DPS); (Silver) Jhunreb Alias (S&A); (Bronze) Juan Ricardo Bernardino (Red Dragon) & Roy Vincent David (San Fernando)
BANTAM: (Gold) Joseph Van Ephraim (Ilocos Norte); (Silver) Lester Aguilar (Rizal); (Bronze) Rengie Tag (AIDA) & Mark Alan Tolentino (San Fernando)
FEATHER: (Gold) Romello Rea (Lateen); (Silver) Jeffrey Figueroa (CSA); (Bronze) Jordan Panayas (Rizal) & Alejandro Badiñas (Bagong Silang)
LIGHT: (Gold) Zaldy Bautista Jr. (Toonsport) ; (Silver) Carlo Manalo (CSA); (Bronze) Mad Palma (DPS) & Russel Mendoza (DPS)
WELTER: (Gold) Brix Ramos (Toonsport); (Silver) Jorge Gabat (CSA); (Bronze) Anthony Martin Ballesteros (Lourdes) & Gershon Bautista (DPS)
MIDDLE-HEAVY: (Gold) Ian Taylor Ignacio (SM); (Silver) Al Joseph Rubio (LSGH); (Bronze) Noel Eriana (Lourdes) & John Albert Pareño (AIDA)

[illegible]
SUPERFIN: (Gold) Edison Bagapo (Manila); (Silver) Julius Cinco (Ilocos Norte); (Bronze) Ricky Asoy (AIDA) & Gamaliel John Denoyo (AIDA)
FIN: (Gold) Ariel Jones Alvior (Zamboanga); (Silver) Josh Kevin Ober (AIDA); (Bronze) Elton Kyle Punzalan (San Fernando) & George Barbarona (Rizal)
FLY: (Gold) Giorgio De Guzman (UST); (Silver) Christian Supenano (Central Gym); (Bronze) Joshua Javen (Amoranto) & Bryan Caguaña (Rizal)
BANTAM: (Gold) Eric Jon De Leon (LSM); (Silver) Rafael Charles Dacuma (SBC); (Bronze) Clint Odayo (NTU-Tigers)
FEATHER: (Gold) Yebil Gabo (AIDA); (Silver) Josh Chris Chiong (SFA); (Bronze) David Rivera (LSGH) & Maurice Adrian Renario (Manila)
LIGHTWELTER MID HEAVY: Rafael Lafortesa (LSGH); (Silver) John [illegible] (Cagayan); (Bronze) Arvie Antonio (ACCTC) & David Masangkay (AIDA)

SENIOR WOMEN'S DIVISION
FIN: (Gold) Eva Marie Ditan (Las Piñas); (Silver) Kathleen Alora (Laguna); (Bronze) Michelle Punzalan (CSFIG) & Mitch Castañares (BNS)
FLY: (Gold) Daleen Cordero (UST); (Silver) Sugar Canlas (UP); (Bronze) Ivy Alindogan (Powerflex) & Richilda Eslandas (Ilocos Norte)
BANTAM: (Gold) Jasmin Strachan (UST); (Silver) Tintin Calulo (UP); (Bronze) Angel Borja (BSU) & Heraldine Quesada (FEU)
FEATHER LIGHT-WELTER: (Gold) Antoinette Rivero (St. Paul); (Silver) Veronica Domingo (FEU); (Bronze) Imee Esteron (FEU) & Ma. Criselda Roxas (Las Piñas)
MIDDLE HEAVY: (Gold) Margarita Bonifacio (Ateneo); (Silver) An Margaret Bayle (Phil. Army); (Bronze) Richarda Gallego (ARC) & Josephine Strachan (UST)

JUNIOR WOMEN'S DIVISION
FIN-FLY: (Gold) Geraldyn Decatus (SSA); (Silver) Erika Edralin (Cagayan TKD); (Bronze) Edive Aruelano (DPS) & Maylen Gloriaga (NTU Tigers)
BANTAM-FEATHER: (Gold) Sarah Joy Arellano (Lateen); (Silver) Patricia Abuan (SSA); (Bronze) Love Joy Ibarra (Ilocos Norte - TILA) & Radha Catang (Muntinlupa)
LIGHTWELTER: (Gold) Esther Marie Singson (Central Gym); (Silver) Rani Ann Ortega (Amoranto); (Bronze) Ma. Jerome Cay Go (Rizal Team) & Princess May Cordero (San Fernando)
MIDDLE HEAVY: (Gold) Sabrina Simbulan (DPS); (Silver) Janice Layman (Ateneo); (Bronze) April Intamo (Rizal) & Michelle Theres Bagasore (S&A)

[illegible]
SUPERFIN: (Gold) Pauline Reyes (NTU Tigers Bacolod); (Silver) Michelle Monterey (Rizal); (Bronze) Mary Grace Tuazon (Zamboanga) & Cristine Chua (Red Dragon)
FIN: (Gold) Reynette Anne Lovenia (UE); (Silver) Leyla Bella Gabo (AIDA); (Bronze) Cathy Jane Hampac (Zamboanga) & Precious Marie Malit (Ilocos Sur)
FLY: (Gold) Manna Angeles (UE); (Silver) Camille Valencia (S&A Workshop); (Bronze) Maxine Lauren Lozada (Malate Catholic) & Desiree Sanchez (UE)
BANTAM: (Gold) Czarina Cabuco (Laguna); (Silver) Kathleen Kaye Roble (Cagayan TKD); Day Myrelle Raga (Ilocos Norte); Rascia Anne Manda (S&A)
FEATHER: (Gold) Jenalee Tayag (Zamboanga); (Silver) Elmie Rose Baradas (NTU-Tigers-Talisay); (Bronze) Ayesa Laruza (ASDC) & Arianne Elnar (AIDA)
LIGHT: (Gold) Kristine Alora (Laguna); (Silver) Kardha Ale Fajardo (St. Mary's Academy); (Bronze) Ruffa Marie Magno (S&A) & Jovellyn Quiambao (San Fernando)

[illegible]
128CM BELOW: (Gold) Michael [illegible] (NTU Tigers Talisay); (Silver) Noah James Patena (Spotzone); (Bronze) Emil Dwight Solano (Corpus Christi) & James Ricardo Lorenzo (DLS-Zobel)
128-136CM: (Gold) Gyle Michael Guasco (LSM); (Silver) Ivan Lex Magsombol (St. Benedict); (Bronze) DeGuzman Uclaa (Central Gym) & Aaron John Retania (Spotzone)
136-144CM: (Gold) Dane Fio De Roda (San Beda College); (Silver) Lyle Matias (Laguna); (Bronze) Russel Marasan (ACS) & Jacob Mark Retania (Spotzone)
144-152CM: (Gold) Diego Navarro (Laguna); (Silver) Noel De Leon (S&A); (Bronze) Lorenzo Lopez Macina (Ateneo) & Luigi Dollosa (Don Bosco Mkt)
152-160CM: (Gold) Dennis Pearl Renaba (Central Gym); (Silver) Domingo Reo Jr. (Bagong [illegible]); (Bronze) Ryan Rey (NTU Tigers Bacolod) & John Manuel Go (SSC)

[illegible]
128CM BELOW: (Gold) Lourdes Labacay (Taytay, Rizal); (Silver) Trance Ana Aguilar (Ilocos Norte); (Bronze) Hannah Lantayo (Bulacan)
128-136CM: (Gold) Jackee Yecyec (Laguna); (Silver) Jyra Marie Lizardo (DPS); (Bronze) Hannah Mendoza (NTA) & Kirstine Chua (NTU-Tigers Bacolod)
136-144CM: (Gold) Reinne Ashlee Landan (UE); (Silver) Cherry Angeli Vistro (Ilocos Norte); (Bronze) Mary Kris Dolen (Cagayan Do-Jang) & Abigail Pascual (Ilocos Norte)
144-152CM: (Gold) Chene Villanueva (NTU-Tigers-Talisay); (Silver) Keena Nicole Amarillo (Red Dragon); (Bronze) Rita Angelica Manota (S&A) & Shamara Meyer Noel (Central Gym)
152-160CM: (Gold) Nicole Raymundo (CSA); (Silver) Mariella Mae [illegible] (Cagayan Do-Jang); (Gold) Renee Ann Wu (Central Gym)

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PBL tourney: Nutrilicious in, RFM out

PSC forming committee

THE PHILIPPINE Sports Commission yesterday bared plans to form an oversight committee for the 2003 Vietnam Southeast Asian Games whose members would be tasked to work hand-in-hand with their counterparts from the technical and screening commission formed by the Philippine Olympic Committee.

With no PSC official to account for the POC group's selection process for the Vietnam joust, PSC Chair Eric Buhain deemed it right to form the Oversight Committee, whose task is to assure "balanced and accurate" selection of athletes who will represent the Philippines in the biennial meet.

By Dennis U. Eroa

WIN some, lose some.

Thus, reacted PBL Commissioner Chino Trinidad after confirming that league pioneer RFM would no longer compete in the next conference.

"The league respects RFM's decision and is thankful for its participation in the recent Challenge Cup," said Trinidad. "That's part of the game. You can't win them all."

Despite RFM's decision, Trinidad is confident that the PBL is headed for another banner year.

Aside from San Miguel Corporation, the coming conference scheduled to start on March 15 will also feature Nutrilicious, a leading fruits and beverages company.

In his letter, longtime RFM executive Elmer Yanga said that budgetary constraints prevented their company from continuing its participation.

"Much as we would like to compete as a regular member, current business conditions, plans and budget availability will not allow us to make such move at the moment," wrote Yanga.

Yanga said RFM isn't closing its door on making a comeback. "We hope that in the future, when the general business conditions will allow us, we can again knock at the PBL door for participation," Yanga added.

He also congratulated Trinidad and his staff and chair Dioceldo Sy for the successful and well-attended championship series between eventual winner Welcoat and Dazz.

RFM rejoined the league last conference, featuring the Sunkist banner.

"We will continue working hard for the progress of the league. The PBL family is one solid family and I am confident that it will achieve new heights this year," Sy said.

Jesse Chua, former team manager of Chowking and Shark Energy Drink, is tasked by the Nutrilicious management to form a competitive squad in the coming conference.

"I'm doing my best to form a very good team. I'm lucky that the players' market is wide. My first problem is finding a coach," Chua said. He also added that he will recruit players from the collegiate ranks.

"I want a team with youthful exuberance. At the same time, it will have maturity because of the presence of veteran PBL players and ex-pros," Chua said.

Despite the exodus of top players to the pros, the coming conference will feature new and exciting players, assuring the PBL of high-quality action.

Earlier, Trinidad told the INQUIRER that the PBL will go regional in order to give provincial cagers a chance to play in top-level basketball.

"This is also part of our grassroots development program," Trinidad explained.

With Trinidad and Sy at the helm, the PBL achieved tremendous success last year. It attracted new fans and was lauded for its financial stability.

Trinidad said the league will continue to find ways to improve its television coverage and will strive to plug loopholes in officiating.

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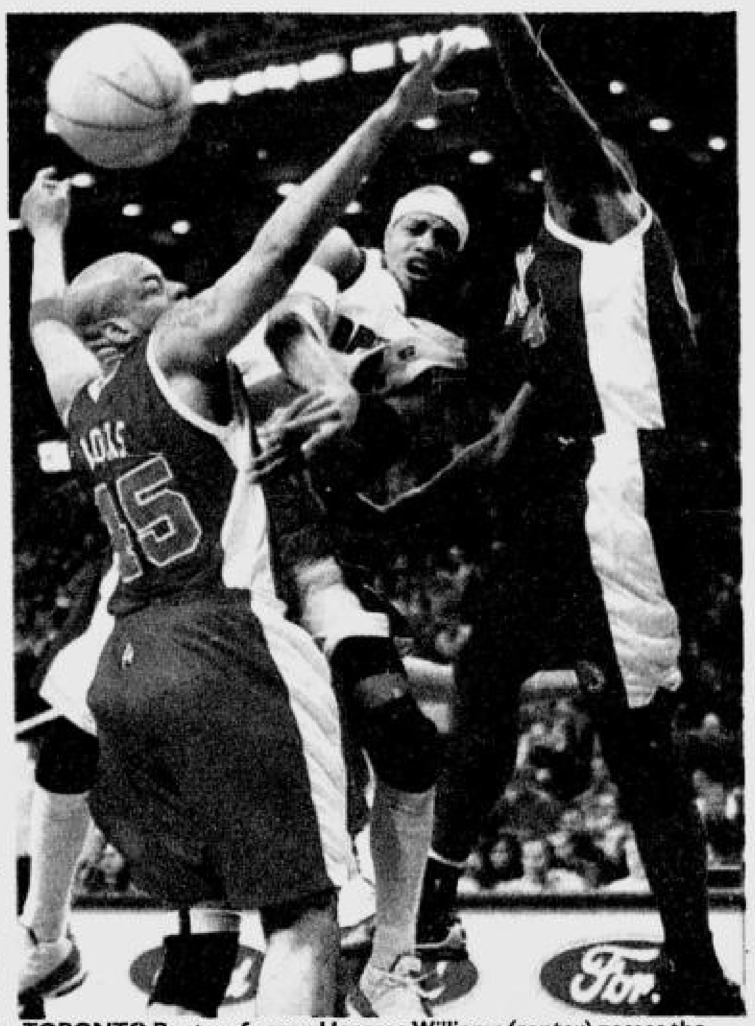


TORONTO Raptors forward Jerome Williams (center) passes the basketball past defending Los Angeles Clippers center Sean Rooks (left) and forward Elton Brand. The Raptors defeated the Clippers, 100-86.

REUTERS

Griffin, Ming power Rockets past Kings

HOUSTON—Eddie Griffin scored 22 points and Yao Ming recorded his team-leading 15th double-double to propel the Houston Rockets to a 105-89 victory over the Sacramento Kings in the NBA Sunday.

Steve Francis and Cuttino Mobley both added 21 points while Yao had 18 points and 10 rebounds as the Rockets grabbed a big early lead before coasting to the win.

Peja Stojakovic scored 31 points for the Kings, who have lost two in a row and are 5-6 in their last 11 games.

The Kings were again without Chris Webber, who has missed eight games with a sprained left ankle and is not expected back for several weeks.

Houston led 13-2 in the early going and pulled into a 59-32 lead, their biggest of the game, late in the first half. The Rockets also led 88-66 after three quarters, despite 19 points from Stojakovic in the third session.

The Rockets tied a season-high with 13 blocked shots and held the Kings to a season-low 12 points in the first quarter.

In Minneapolis, Kevin Garnett scored 30 points and hauled down 17 rebounds to lead the Minnesota Timberwolves to a 99-91 win over the Philadelphia 76ers.

The Timberwolves dressed just 10 players due to injuries but still won their eighth successive game at home. Mac Jackson had 14 points while Gary Trent added 12.

Allen Iverson scored 21 points for the 76ers while Derrick Coleman scored 15 points and had 11 rebounds. *Reuters*

COMPLETE RESULTS

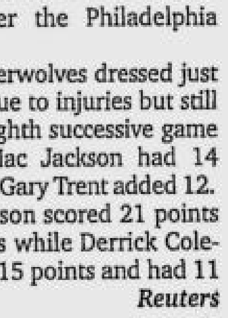
PORTLAND 114, CLEVELAND 95; TORONTO 100, LA CLIPPERS 86; ATLANTA 97, ORLANDO 89; MINNESOTA 99, PHILADELPHIA 91; HOUSTON 105, SACRAMENTO 89; DENVER 93, MEMPHIS 78 *AFP*

SPORTSWATCH

Pacers: No to 'Bad Boy' tag

INDIANAPOLIS—The "Bad Boy" image of Isiah Thomas' Detroit Pistons has been shifted to Indiana — and the Pacers don't like it. Despite 12 flagrant fouls this season and suspensions against Thomas and Ron Artest last week, the Pacers insist they're being unfairly labeled because of Thomas' association with the notorious Pistons. "Just because Isiah's our coach and he was on the Bad Boys team, they consider us Bad Boys," pointguard Jamaal Tinsley said. The Pacers have the best record in the Eastern Conference at 34-14, well ahead of their pace from last year, when they went 42-40 and lost to New Jersey in the first round of the playoffs. Jermaine O'Neal was voted the starting center for the All-Star game, and Brad Miller was chosen as a reserve. But the behavior of the young team has overshadowed its turnaround. *AP*

Yanks sign 'Godzilla' for $21M



MATSUI

TOKYO—Japanese baseball star Hideki "Godzilla" Matsui left Tokyo on Monday to join his new team, the New York Yankees–who have signed him for a three-year US$21 million contract. "It is a bit lonely leaving my country," the 28-year-old slugger said before getting on the New York-bound flight from Tokyo's Narita Airport. "There will be a lot for me to learn, and I'd like to absorb them when I come back to Japan in the future." Before leaving, he was presented with a golden Godzilla doll–after his nickname–and a bouquet of flowers. Matsui has hit .300 or more in four straight seasons, with at least 36 homers and 95 RBIs. He led the Central League, one of Japan's two pro leagues, last season with 50 homers and 107 RBIs for the Tokyo Yomiuri Giants. *AP*

Williams stars as AFC rips NFC

HONOLULU, Hawaii—Ricky Williams rushed for 56 yards and two touchdowns on 11 carries, caught three passes for 18 yards and forced a fumble on special teams to earn player of the game honors as the AFC rolled to a 45-20 rout of the NFC. The National Football League rushing champion with 1,853 yards, Williams scored on a pair of one-yard runs in the first half when the AFC built a 28-6 lead. "It was a great experience," Williams said. "Not being here before, I never knew what it was all about. It is really a great week and hopefully I will have the opportunity to come back many, many more times." He also forced a fumble by Jeremy Shockey of the New York Giants on a kickoff return. *AFP*

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mo jimmys

▷ mo: a slang term for /more/

jimmys: a jump shot. example: that kid's jimmy is smooth.

mo cookies

mo: a slang term for /more/

cookies: used in reference to stealing a basketball. example: he stole his cookies!

mo dimes

▷ mo: a slang term for /more/

dimes: an american coin with a value of ten pennies that in the context of basketball means an assist. example: did you see that pass? he dropped a dime.

mo shakes

▷ mo: a slang term for /more/

shakes: the result of several basketball moves and fakes by a dribbling offensive player which has caused a defender to try to go into more than one direction at the same time.

mo boom

▷ mo: a slang term for /more/

boom: a powerful, loud, and emphatic dunk shot. example: i boomed on you, man!

mo cleaning glass

▷ mo: a slang term for /more/

cleaning glass: to rebound a basketball. originated due to the fact most backboards are made of plexiglas, and many players use big swiping motions to gather rebounds.

mo game

▷ mo: a slang term for /more/

game: what a multi-skilled player has when he wears the nike shox voll. its full-length shox technology provides the responsive energy you need to shake, shoot jimmys, steal cookies, drop dimes, boom and clean glass.

▷ nike.com/nikeshox

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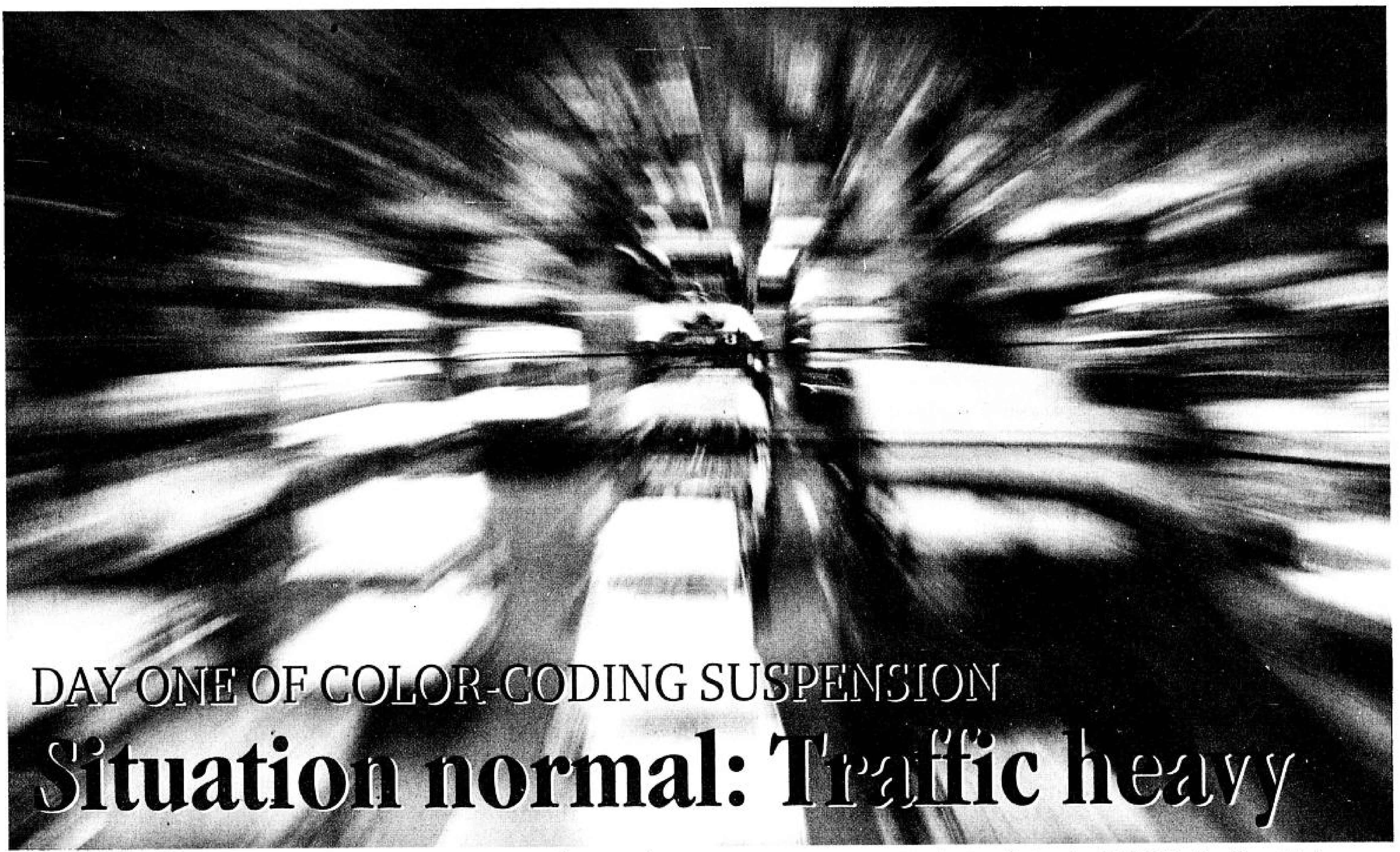


DAY ONE OF COLOR-CODING SUSPENSION

Situation normal: Traffic heavy

By Leila Salaverria, Tina Santos and Agnes Donato

YES, TRAFFIC was heavy in Metro Manila yesterday. No, it was nothing unusual.

This was according to Metro Manila Development Authority officials, who were gauging the first day of the three-week trial period wherein the Unified Vehicular Volume Reduction Program would be suspended in all but one city—Makati—in the whole of Metro Manila.

Both MMDA Chair Bayani Fernando and Traffic Operations Center Director Angelito Vergel De Dios said traffic flow on EDSA as of noon yesterday was "normal," meaning there was the usual heavy flow especially during rush hours.

Vergel De Dios added there were no unusually heavy traffic flow recorded, while Fernando said that from his observation point—on a helicopter hovering over Metro Manila—the flow was okay.

But Fernando said yesterday that it was but natural for motorists to experience heavy traffic flow and other inconveniences in the initial stages of the trial run, and called for motorists to let the period run its course before passing judgement on it.

"It's too early to tell (whether the trial has been effective)," he said. "Let's not pre-judge it. People will still have to adapt."

Jeepney drivers' plaints

Jeepney drivers in northern Metro Manila yesterday hit Fernando for the "heavier" than normal traffic in the area—the result of the three-week UVVRP suspension.

After the MMDA suspended color-coding yesterday, the volume of vehicles in the Camanava (Caloocan-Malabon-Navotas-Valenzuela) area, especially in the usually traffic congested Monumento area, had visibly increased, resulting in a "much chaotic" situation, according to the drivers.

"Fernando did not seem to have given much thought to the plan," jeepney driver Jerry Abuel, 46, said in Filipino.

"Traffic was already terrible when they were still implementing the color-coding scheme," said Ricky Clores, 34, jeepney driver in Malabon. "How much more now that the vehicles, which used to be banned from the streets on a particular day, are allowed to go out any given day? What does (Fernando) expect?"

Bus drivers' plaints

In keeping traffic congestion to a minimum, the MMDA is eyeing the implementation of an odd-even scheme that would cut in half the number of passenger buses on EDSA.

MMDA Chair Bayani Fernando said he would meet with bus operators this week to talk about the proposal.

But the head of the Integrated Metro Bus Operators Association (Imboa), Claire Dela Fuente, expressed alarm over Fernando's proposal.

"We're maintaining a 'wait-and-see' attitude on the suspension," Dela Fuente said. "But what worries us is the reported plan that if this experiment fails, the scheme will be re-implemented—this time, affecting us."

At the moment, public utility buses are exempt under the current scheme.

Dela Fuente said that if Fernando really wanted to address the traffic problem in the metropolis, he should implement stricter measures in rounding up operators of "colorum" and "out-of-line" buses and Tamaraw FX vans.

"Why pick on us (legitimate operators)?" dela Fuente asked. "Why favor the cars, which carry only a few passengers anyway?"

She noted that 70 percent of the people in the metropolis consist of workers and other commuters who cannot afford a car.

"These are the real reasons there's traffic in Metro Manila," she said. "Government can solve the traffic problem by getting rid of (colorum vehicles), not by picking on legitimate operators like us."

But Fernando maintained that there are "too many buses on EDSA."

"And a lot of them don't have passengers," he added.

Fernando said around 3,000 buses ply the traffic-prone EDSA everyday, but that half of these might be sufficient to serve commuters in the metropolis.

He also said that the odd-even scheme would be beneficial to bus operators because, with less buses on the road, their chances of getting passengers would be higher.

Taxi drivers' plaints

Taxi drivers yesterday protested the three-week UVVRP suspension, citing the same reasons.

Leonora Naval, head of the Association of Taxi Operators in Metro Manila (ATOMM), said that the lifting of the UVVRP not only caused chaos in the streets, but also hurt the business of taxi operators and drivers.

"The sudden rise in the number of vehicles in the streets only made the traffic even more terrible," Naval told the INQUIRER in a telephone interview. "We suggest that the color-coding scheme be returned, but this time affecting only private vehicles."

Makati alone

Makati alone remained untouched by the UVVRP suspension—except in those parts of EDSA, C-5 and the South Superhighway, which run through the city.

While others see nothing wrong with Makati's insistence on keeping the UVVRP to curb traffic congestion, there are those who find the city officials' decision as causing too much inconvenience.

Len, an employee of one of Makati's call centers and a Marikina resident, said she disagrees with the city government's decision because it makes the UVVRP trial suspension useless for Makati employees. She said the city should have gone along with the trial period, since it's only for three weeks anyway.

"It's making the MMDA's exercise in determining whether or not the UVVRP should be lifted futile," she said.

But there were those who agreed with the continued implementation of the scheme.

Aaron, a college graduate, said Makati has no other option but to keep the UVVRP, saying it's hard enough driving around the city and that it's already too congested there.

Reports from the MMDA Metro base show that the southbound traffic on EDSA was heaviest from 6:30 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. The most congested intersection was the Cubao-Aurora area, but the tail-end of the traffic began at the foot of the Quezon Avenue flyover.

On the northbound lane, traffic was heaviest from 10 to 11 a.m., especially from the Buendia to Boni-Pioneer stretch.

ESPAÑA, Manila at 11 a.m., Feb. 3.
DENNIS SABANGAN

'Big mistake suspending color-coding'

By Christian Esguerra

CHIEF Supt. Romeo Maganto yesterday questioned the three-week suspension of his brainchild, the "color-coding" traffic scheme..

"There's too much crab mentality in government," Maganto said without referring to any government official. "They want to scrap it simply because the idea is not theirs ... just because it was credited to me."

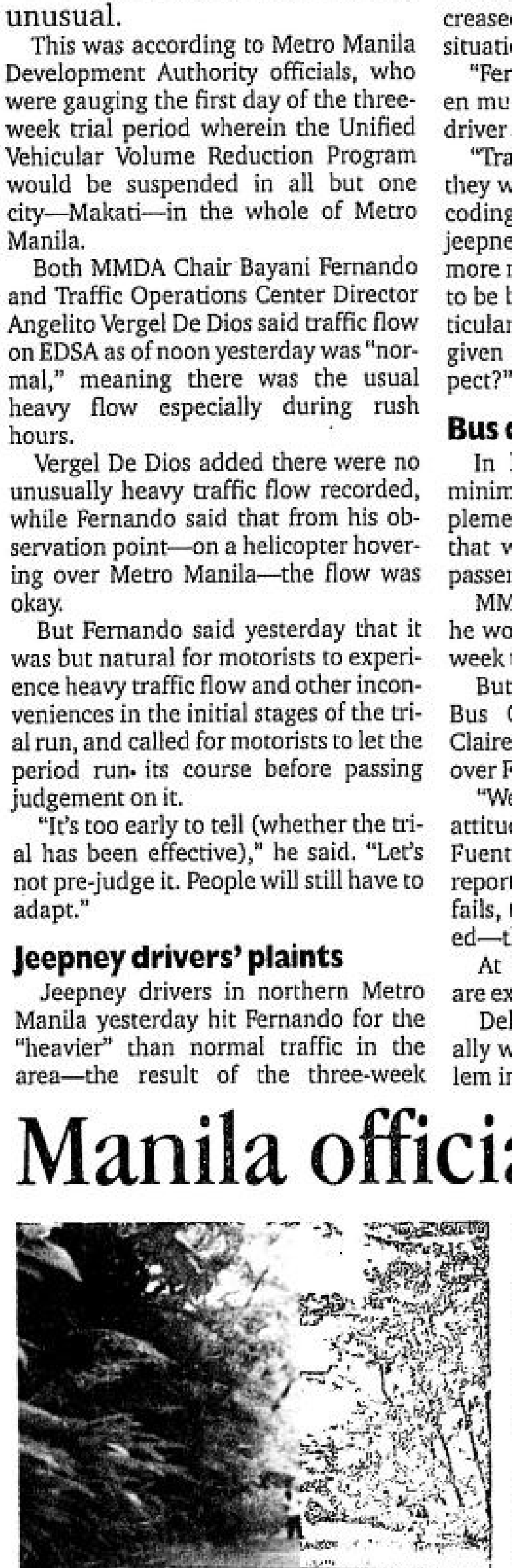
Maganto said Bayani Fernando, chair of the Metro Manila Development Authority, was giving himself more problems by suspending the traffic system until Feb. 21, supposedly because it had failed to substantially reduce the volume of vehicles plying Metro Manila thoroughfares daily.

The police official said Fernando should blame his men, not the system, for the failure. "The system is simple, logical and effective. The problem is that the MMDA has not been implementing it properly."

In 1996, Maganto, then MMDA executive director for traffic, introduced the color-coding scheme which was supposed to reduce by 20 percent the volume of about 1.8 million vehicles.

The scheme was named as such because a colored sticker was assigned to each pair of numbers representing the last digit of license plates. It was later renamed the Unified Vehicular Volume Reduction Program.

Manila official: Arroceros is ours to develop



THE contested forest park in Arroceros Manila.

By Jerome Aning

THE ARROCEROS Forest Park is ours and it is for us to develop.

This is the position of the Manila's public school teachers head, who spoke for the first time yesterday regarding the dispute over the forest park.

Dr. Ma. Luisa Quiñones, superintendent of the division of city schools, told reporters that they are going to assert their right over the 2.1-hectare park, which the environmentalist group Winner Foundation is fighting to preserve.

Quiñones said that the teachers have tried very hard to "understand" the sectors involved in the development of the Arroceros property, ever since Manila Mayor Lito Atienza opened talks, seeking an acceptable compromise.

"Instead of reciprocating ... Winner decided to hurl unfair and baseless allegations against the mayor," Quiñones said.

The school chief, who represents the Department of Education in the city, was referring to Winner officials' accusations that the mayor planned to cut trees in the area to give way for the construction of an education building.

She accused Winner of treating the Arroceros property as if it was its "exclusive domain."

Quiñones also told reporters that the division has the title to the property and prepared its own development plan.

The superintendent described the memorandum of agreement signed by Winner and City Hall in 1993 as invalid, saying it was neither ratified by the city council or the city's school board.

The land was bought for P65 million from the Land Bank of the Philippines. Through the MOA, City Hall turned over the property to Winner, which adopted a 15-year forest development plan that would end in 2012.

"We were then told that the land shall be used only as a tree nursery and as a campsite for boy and girl scouts (while) the building has not yet been erected," Quiñones said.

The schools chief said ownership, not the environment, is the real issue behind the forest park controversy.

"We will not cut or kill any tree, we will take care of all the trees and replant those affected by the new building," she said.

She added that the teachers also know how to protect and preserve the environment.

Quiñones added that the division badly needs a new building because its offices at City Hall is crammed, with more than 900 personnel occupying the premises.

Asked if she was willing to work with Winner to settle the dispute, Quiñones said: "We can't work with a group with which we don't have an agreement."

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The People's Champion! Is back!

Malabon mayor faces more charges

By Tina Santos

MALABON City Mayor Amado Vicencio may be facing yet another round of charges.

This time, the charges of conspiracy stemmed from Vicencio's alleged dealings with a fishpond owner, whose property was designated as the site for the relocation of some 2,500 families in four barangays.

The families will be moved to the site in April, to give way to the Manila-Clark Railway Project of the national government.

Malabon opposition councilors have accused city officials of allegedly acquiring the Tanza, Navotas property under questionable circumstances.

Councilor Edilberto Torres and Ma. Luisa Roque-Viillaroel have revealed that their lawyers are now carefully studying details of the case prior to the filing of charges.

Torres and Roque-Villaroel alleged that Vicencio and company have conspired with Mario Siochi, the alleged chief executive officer and president of the Jun-Jun Fishing Corp., allegedly a dummy corporation of Siochi and the corporate owner of the controversial fishpond.

Torres said that Vicencio may again be suspended should he fail to explain himself before the offices of the President and the Ombudsman.

He said they would first file the administrative charges before the Ombudsman before filing the appropriate criminal charges.

"They are putting the lives of the residents of barangays Tugatog, Acacia, Tinajeros and Potrero in great danger," Torres said.

Seeing the condition of the proposed relocation site during a visit on Jan. 14, Calrita Eneria, who represents the affected barangays said she is convinced that the government was misleading them.

The city government has offered to buy the 12.5-hectare property for P700 per square meter. It has, in fact, made the downpayment of P12.6 million eight months ago.

The downpayment is allegedly "the rough equivalent of 15 percent of the purchase value of more or less 124,728 square meters" representing the total area of three parcels of land belonging to Siochi, the Malabon councilors said.

Under a Memorandum of Agreement between Siochi and the city government, Siochi agreed to fill up the fishpond within six months beginning April. Siochi had sought an extension which expired on Jan. 28. He apparently failed in his commitment and has again sought another 90 days to land-fill the fishpond.

City legal officer Danilo Diaz said this will be the last time the city council will accommodate Siochi.

In the MOA signed in April 29, 2002, Roque-Villaroel succeeded in inserting a significant provision reducing by a drastic amount the acquisition cost of the property should Siochi fail to fill up the fishpond and make it habitable.

Dads want depot insured for P20B

By Jerome Aning

OPPOSITION councilors in Manila want the three oil firms using the Pandacan fuel depot to insure the district's residents who are living in the shadow of the facility.

Councilor Bernardito Ang said Caltex, Shell and Petron should set aside at least P20 billion to compensate Pandacan residents who would lose life or property, in case a large fire or a terrorist strike hits the depot.

Another minority councilor, Benjamin Asilo of the 1st district, backed Ang's proposal and who also denounced the continued stay of the depot in Pandacan.

Last Thursday, the City Council extended the stay of the depot in Pandacan for three more months, after Malacañang warned against the consequences of phasing out the facility, while a war in the Middle East looms.

Ang and Asilo said it is not fair for the city government to be burdened with the cost of saving and rehabilitating lives and property in the event of a disaster.

"The city government should not be the only one carrying the cost of maintaining the depot," Ang said.

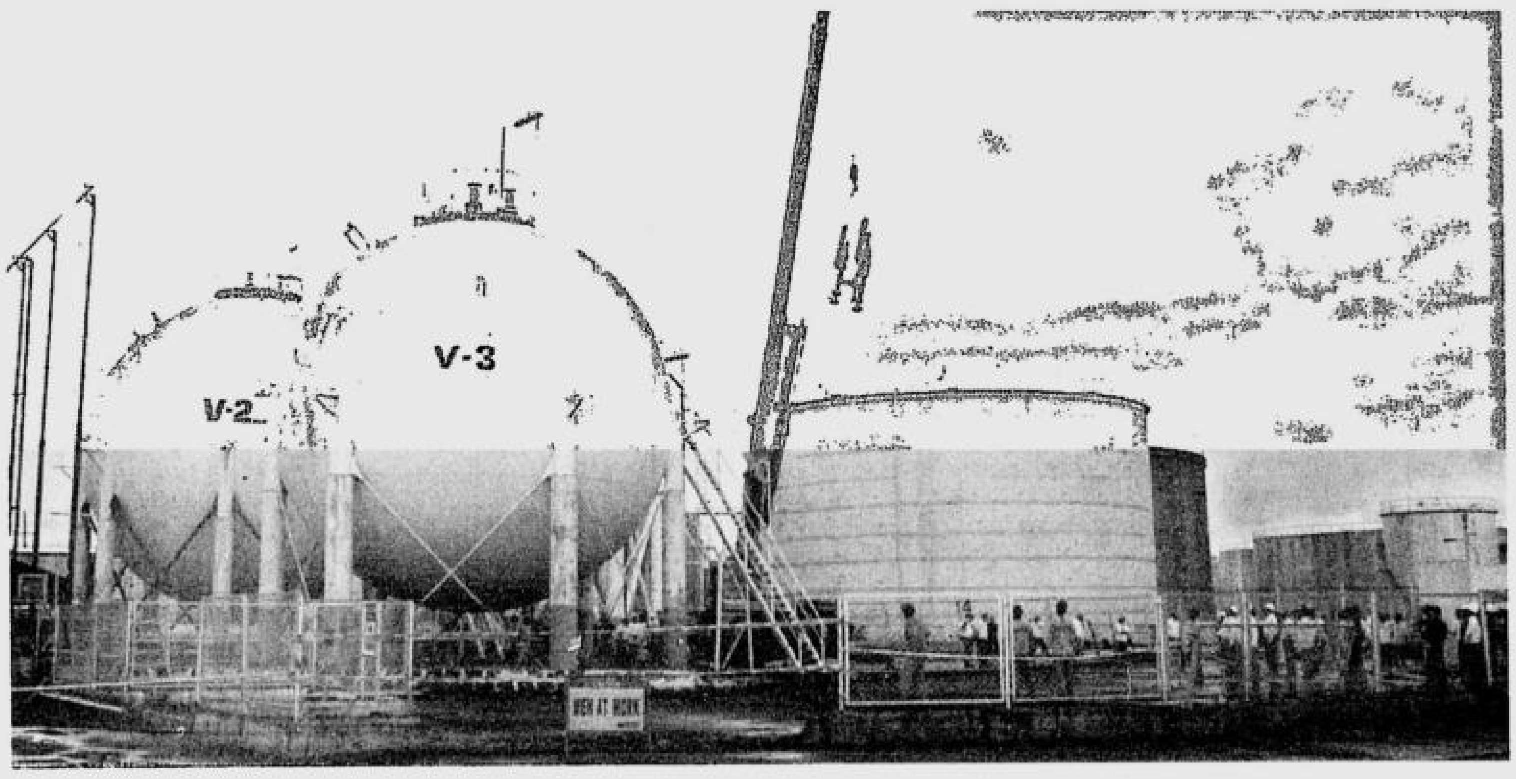
Asilo said the the oil firms are in fact getting more from the city government than the other way around.

The councilors said that the taxes paid by the depot are not enough to pay for the lives and property of residents of Pandacan and surrounding areas should tragedy strike.

Ang added that since the depot ensures steady oil supply in Metro Manila and the rest of Luzon, other local government units, as well as the national government, should pay for the cost of protecting the site.

Despite the extension, Ang and Asilo still want the oil firms to close the depot in Pandacan.

The Council has converted itself to a committee and sat en banc to study the 2001 ordinance, which phased out the depot by converting the Pandacan site from an industrial to a commercial area.



THE Pandacan oil facility presents a ripe target for terrorists.

JIM GUIAO PUNZALAN

The ignoramus police officer

ON TARGET

Ramon Tulfo

VICE Adm. Reuben Lista, Coast Guard commandant, has text me from Australia that he would order an investigation into a report in this space that a Coast Guard official receives from P150,000 to P200,000 for every Taiwanese fishing vessel that poaches in our waters.

Although he said he did not believe the report, he would order a probe nevertheless.

Admiral, please investigate first before making comments about the truthfulness of the report.

* * *

I got the report from Coast Guard insiders.

On the surface the report seems valid. Not a single Taiwanese fishing boat has been apprehended poaching in Philippine territory.

On the other hand, numerous fishing boats from the People's Republic of China have been caught, their occupants now languishing in various jails.

Why do we discriminate between the Taiwanese and the Mainland Chinese, Admiral?

Just asking.

* * *

Mayor Jojo Zapanta of Taytay, Rizal is mimicking Metro Manila Development Authority (MMDA) chair Bayani Fernando in dealing with vendors in his small town.

But his way of doing it smacks of oppression and dictatorship. With a handful of armed bodyguards, Zapanta personally confiscates the wares of vendors in a neighborhood the residents have converted into a *talipapa* or private market.

The mayor's bodyguards allegedly beat up vendors who resist. With his service car, the mayor allegedly tried to run over a five-year-old boy that was preventing him and his bodyguards from apprehending the boy's mother.

* * *

Zapanta was featured in this space last year because of his armed bodyguards.

Did his private bodyguards, who are casual municipal employees, have any authority to carry firearms? We asked that last year.

We even brought up the matter with Interior Secretary Joey Lina.

* * *

The Taytay vendors said that Zapanta's bodyguards poked their guns at vendors who resisted arrest and the confiscation of their wares.

I asked Supt. Pedro Ganir, the town police chief, in my interview with him over my radio program, "Isumbong Mo Kay Tulfo" why he allowed the mayor's bodyguards to carry guns.

Cornered, Ganir, instead of answering my question said, I wasn't paying his salary so I didn't have any right to berate him.

* * *

Hoy, bobo! Every taxpayer has the right to berate a government official who's not doing his job.

You apparently don't know this so I'm telling you now so this will add to your limited knowledge: your salary comes from the taxes that we, the taxpayers, pay.

Now, isn't knowledge beautiful, Superintendent?

By the way, *saan ka ba galing na planeta*?

* * *

Ganir knew that the guns carried by the mayor's bodyguards were illegal.

Why did he allow them to carry illegal guns?

By tolerating an illegal act, Ganir is culpable under our laws.

How did this ignoramus become a police superintendent?

* * *

I am not defending the illegal act of the vendors–if indeed it is illegal to sell wares in a private property–this writer is questioning Mayor Zapanta's method.

He could have enforced the law or town ordinance against illegal vending with compassion.

* * *

That message also goes to MMDA Chair Fernando, who's also public works and highways secretary.

Yes, the law should be upheld at all costs.

But it seems Fernando will be going out of bounds if he carries out his threat to pour kerosene on food items sold by the vendors.

Parang OA ka na, Mr. Fernando! Why don't you just give the confiscated food items to charitable institutions?

Remember, food is grace from the Almighty. You might get bad karma for deliberately wasting food.

* * *

Who's this politician whose wife is undergoing psychotherapy because he always beats her up?

Publicly, the husband projects an image of not being capable of hurting even a fly.

Women even think that he's such a sissy they adopted him one of their own. Wait till they hear about his wife's constant visits to the shrink, her face black and blue.

Thousands stranded in Navotas jeep strike

By Tina Santos

THOUSANDS of commuters were stranded yesterday after hundreds of jeepney drivers and operators went on strike to denounce an ordinance requiring them to pay an additional fee for a sticker issued by the Navotas municipal government.

The jeepney drivers, plying the routes of Monumento-Navotas, Malabon-Navotas and Navotas-Divisiora lambasted the Navotas municipal government for imposing the P100-fee for sticker.

"The payment of P100 for the sticker by every public utility jeepney driver and operator plying the Navotas route will be another burden to all of us. We can no longer allow it, we are already paying P300 to the Malabon City government for their sticker since we pass through their main thoroughfares," said jeepney driver Antonio Melanio, 43, a resident of Navotas.

"*Maganda sana ang layunin ng nasabing* ordinance *pero dagdag na naman itong pabigat sa aming mga* drivers *at* operators," Melanio said.

The drivers said they want the ordinances of Malabon and Navotas scrapped because they only serve as a source of corruption for government officials.

It was gathered that the Malabon City Council passed an ordinance in April requiring all public utility vehicles, which pass through the city roads, to have a sticker.

And on Oct. 28, 2002, the Navotas Municipal Council likewise passed an ordinance (No. 2002-24), authored by Councilor Ulysses Alonzo, imposing PUVs to pay P100 for the sticker.

Local government officials of the said localities said the ordinances were intentionally made as a safeguard against colorum vehicles that traverse Malabon-Navotas route, among others, which ply without legitimate franchise from the Land Trasportation Franchising and Regulatory Board (LTFRB).

Based on the Malabon City Council ordinance, all PUVs without the said sticker will be apprehended and required to pay the P500 while Navotas adopted the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority (MMDA) rules on fines.

According to Ome Santos, Malabon Public Safety Traffic Management Office (PSTM) operation chief, said there are around 300 PUJs that travel daily in Malabon-Navotas, Monumento-Navotas, around 100 of which are colorums.

This St. Columban angel prays for help from giant drug firm

AYN GUIANG

SHE faces the biggest battle of her young life but Danierette Ayn Guiang often appears like she's having fun.

Reality is however heart-rending.

A chubby nine-year-old with rosy cheeks, Ayn, an honor student at the St. Columban in Olongapo City, is presently confined at the UST Hospital, fighting to stay alive after being hit by a rare fungal infection to the brain believed to have been carried by birds.

Ayn is no ordinary patient. She has become synonymous with courage.

When she was five, the only daughter of the former Imelda Remoto, a bookkeeper, and Daniel, a seaman, suffered from high fever. She developed rashes which alarmed her parents, who brought her to UST specialists.

The world fell apart when Ayn was diagnosed with acute lymphoblastic leukemia in September 1999.

Ayn, with the help of her family, held on to dear life. Her parents kept the faith, following the three-year treatment which already costs a fortune.

God gave Ayn the greatest gift two days after celebrating Christmas. Her response to chemotherapy was excellent and the St. Columban's angel was a candidate for off-treatment.

But the celebration was to be short lived. A day after New Year's, she developed high fever and had to be rushed back to the hospital.

Ayn was positive for cryptoccus neoformans, a deadly disease which can render her brain dead if not treated. Because of her weak immune system, she was prone to the disease which is common among AIDS patient.

"It was devastating," said Imelda, knowing that the family's resources are now being depleted.

"But I'm doing everything to save my daughter."

The Guiangs are spending no less than P10,000 a day in order to "kill" the disease. She needs 30 vials of Amphotericin B which costs P8,500 each and 180 Diflucan capsules which costs P430 each. The total cost of treatment will run up to P500,000, minus their daily expenses at the hospital.

Ayn is knocking at the door of Bristol Myers Squibb, one of the world's leading pharmaceuticals and maker of the life-saving drugs for help.

"I hope that Bristol Myers Squibb will listen to my plea because I want to get well," Ayn told the INQUIRER.

The family is also asking Olongapo Mayor Kate Gordon, Rep. James Gordon and SBMA chair Tong Payumo for help.

Ayn's mother can be reached at 0917-893-31-35 or at 09185568434.

METROBRIEFS

Gutted

JAIME Mateo was hurt, while at least 20 families were rendered homeless when fire broke out in a densely populated residential area in Mandaluyong City over the weekend. Investigators said an exploding kerosene gas stove sparked the fire. Police said the fire started at 9:41 p.m. in the kitchen of Mateo, who was then cooking dinner. SFO2 Danny Medina, Mandaluyong City fireman, said the blaze quickly spread to adjoining houses on Daang Bakal Street, and only the timely arrival of firemen prevented the fire from going out of control. *Nelson Flores*

Arrested

THE GOOD memory of cashier Carol M. Mayores, 22, led to the apprehension of the man who held her up and tried to rape her two weeks ago in Makati. Suspect Rodel De Vera, 22, a resident of Barangay West Rembo, Makati, was nabbed on Thursday night while urinating outside the Guadalupe Commercial Center near the Cloverleaf exchange in Guadalupe, Makati. Mayores spotted him at around 8 p.m. while she was waiting for a ride home, police said. Meanwhile, De Vera's 19-year-old sister, Rodela, joined him in jail when she went to visit her detained brother. Mayores was still at the police station when Rodela went to the station—still wearing the necklace that was stolen from the victim. Investigation showed that Mayores, a cashier at the Mercury Drug Store in Rockwell, was on her way home when De Vera held her up and tried to rape her. But Mayores was able to free herself from his grasp and escaped. *Leila Salaverria*

Convicted

QUEZON City judge Judge Evelyn Cabochan on Friday sentenced to death a tricycle driver for raping his own daughter once in 1995 and again in 1997. Aside from the death penalty, the accused, a resident of Kamias Road in Quezon City, was also sentenced to life imprisonment for having committed the same offense against the victim, then 11 years old, sometime in March 1993. The death penalty law was only reimplemented in 1994. In her testimony, the victim, now 21 years old, said that her father had raped her since she was in sixth grade and until the time he was arrested.
Agnes Donato

Stabbed

ELDERLY caretaker Manuel Velado was stabbed dead by a fellow caretaker identified only as "Boy" on Saturday morning in Quezon City. Velado, 53, a caretaker of a house on Sgt. Catolos, Street, Barangay Pinagkaisahan, Quezon City, died on the spot. PO3 Jun Mortel said the victim's brother found the body at around 8:20 a.m. Responding investigators discovered numerous stab wounds in the victim's the back.
Alcuin Papa

Bong Revilla bulldozes way through heart of disc piracy

By Leah Salterio and TJ Burgonio

AS THOUGH starring in a movie, Videogram Regulatory Board (VRB) Chair Bong Revilla Jr. gallantly drove a bulldozer to signal off the crushing of more than 12 million illegally copied CDs, VCDs and DVDs at the Camp Crame grounds in Quezon City yesterday.

He then declared that, in reality, "this is just the beginning."

Revilla, saying the piracy industry is like a chameleon that finds ways to adapt to the present situation, vowed to intensify his campaign.

Last month, William Lash 111, the US assistant secretary of commerce for market access and compliance, criticized the Philippine government for not doing enough to stamp out copyright piracy.

Stung by criticisms that authorities were helpless against piracy, Revilla, together with Philippine National Police Director Hermogenes Ebdane Jr., supervised several trucks and steamrollers which ran over piles of VCDs, DVDs and music CDs with a street value of P1.5 billion that formed a huge zero figure at the camp's oval grounds.

Target

"That's our target," Revilla said of the huge zero formation. "That means we want to eradicate piracy in the country."

The VRB chair called on the public to support his anti-piracy crusade.

"There will be no supply if there is no demand," Revilla said. "This is not yet enough. Others are saying we are not doing anything. Then what do you call this?"

The actor also noted that pirates did not succeed at manufacturing copies of the entries in the recent Metro Manila Film Festival, which included his own action-adventure-fantasy movie, "Agimat."

"That was a big factor for local movies, that's why a number of entries made good money during the festival," Revilla said.

Yesterday's figures represented 60 percent of the total haul of pirated CDs which the VRB seized from illegal vendors in malls around Metro Manila over the past six months. The rest remained in the VRB warehouse.

Revilla acknowledged the support of Pres. Gloria Macapagal Arroyo in the VRB's anti-piracy drive.

He also thanked the group of stuntmen who helped him go after vendors of pirated discs.

Initial gains

The raiding team included the VRB Task Force Unit, officers of the Western Police District (WPD) led by Col. Pedro Bulaong, and members of the Presidential Security Group (PSG).

Revilla admitted that, while police scored initial gains by seizing replicating machines in northern Metro Manila last year, it would be harder to crack down on "disk pirates" who use "CD writer."

Use of this hardware is allowed by law, he said.

Also present yesterday were action star Rudy Fernandez, Revilla's wife Lani Mercado, German Moreno, Bobby Andrews, lawyer Espiridion Laxa, Efren Reyes Jr., King Gutierrez, John Lesaca, VRB vice chair and executive director Lualhati Buenafe and Leo Martinez, in his first official function as the newly appointed director general of the Film Academy of the Philipines.

After the ceremonies, spectators were seen picking through the smashed discs and taking away some that survived intact, the Associated Press reported.

REVILLA strikes at pirated discs with vengeance. EDWIN BACASMAS

Piece of paper stalls Llamas case

By Philip C. Tubeza

A PIECE of paper has stalled the filing of charges in the killing of Ateneo graduate Jose Ramon Llamas.

Authorities said they would have to first get hold of the evidence before murder charges are filed against primary suspect Bashir Abdulrahman.

Regional Director Edmund Arugay, National Bureau of Investigation-National Capital Region Unit chief, said investigators are looking for the piece of paper that Llamas was allegedly writing on when he was shot dead.

NBI agents, the Llamas family lawyers, and the Pasay police held a case conference at the NBI headquarters yesterday.

But they decided to postpone the filing of the murder charges until all evidence are in.

"We want to find out if he wrote something on that piece of paper. And if he did, what was it all about," Arugay said.

"This could be a vital piece of evidence," he added.

Abdulrahman allegedly shot Llamas while the victim was writing something on a piece of paper after the two men had a traffic altercation at the corner of Buendia and Taft avenues in Pasay City on Jan. 10.

The Pasay City Police-Scene of the Crime Operations (Soco) team allegedly is in possession of that vital piece of evidence.

Arugay said the clincher in the case was the material evidence investigators gathered.

The NBI was able to confirm that Abdulrahman owned the Kawasaki motorcycle the gunman had left at the crime scene.

One of the shells found in the crime scene also matched the shell specimen kept at Camp Crame for Abdulrahman's licensed Taurus 9 mm pistol.

Arugay added that a murder case would be filed since there was "treachery" involved in the killing.

"Our investigation has confirmed that he (Llamas) was writing something on a piece of paper when the suspect shot him. He had no chance to defend himself," Arugay said.

He said Llamas was first hit in the nape, which meant that Abdulrahman shot him while his back was turned.

"Then the suspect shot him again twice even though he was already sprawled on the ground," Arugay added.

Investigators allegedly have three witnesses who confirmed that it was Abdulrahman who killed Llamas.

They are confident that an arrest warrant would soon be issued against the suspect.

Arugay said that their latest information showed that Abdulrahman is still in the country.

He said NBI agents are combing the country's "southern backdoor" in Mindanao to make sure that the suspect does not slip out to Sabah, Malaysia or Indonesia.

Not in Pampanga; so where's suspect in Llamas killing?

CITY OF SAN FERNANDO—No trace whatsoever of Bashir Abdulrahman.

Muslim leaders and police officials, who had joined hands in the hunt for the primary suspect in the killing of Ateneo law graduate Jose Ramon Llamas, issued this statement to the INQUIRER yesterday.

"We haven't found a trace of him anywhere in the province," said Abdul Aziz Alonto, chair of the Pampanga Muslim Development Association.

Alonto, also the adviser of Gov. Manuel "Lito" Lapid on Muslim affairs, said the search for Abdulrahman, which began last Wednesday, covered all Muslim villages in the towns of Guagua, Porac, Sasmuan, Apalit, Masantol and the cities of San Fernando and Angeles.

The hunt, which involved more than 50 Muslim leaders, was made on the orders of Lapid.

However, Lapid refused to end the hunt and ordered Alonto's group to continue searching for the suspect.

Abdulrahman had reportedly bragged about his closeness to Lapid but the governor reiterated that he did not know him.

Lapid said the suspect or any member of his family had not been hired in his movie projects or had not been a beneficiary of his social services in the province.

Alonto said he and his fellow leaders were alarmed over reports that Abdulrahman was hiding in the province. "He shouldn't be dragging us or the governor into this controversy," Alonto said.

He added that Muslims in Pampanga "do not and would not give protection to an outlaw." "We know we are migrants here and we try as much to keep peace in our adopted province," he said.

Anshari Datupaito, provincial director of the Office of Muslim Affairs, confirmed that the search for Abdulrahman had turned "negative."

"We have mobilized all OMA coordinators who have made the rounds of the villages. Abdulrahman has no known relatives in Pampanga nor has he been seen here since last week," Datupaito said.

He said Muslims in Pampanga were not harboring the suspect.

"Although we are brothers, we do not tolerate wrong doings," he said. *Tonette Orejas, PDI Central Luzon Desk*

3 kids hurt in pillbox explosion

By Christian V. Esguerra

THREE children were injured in a pillbox explosion in Pasay City yesterday morning.

Paulrence dela Cruz, 8, Cristine Salino, 11, and her cousin Ronald Morano, 9, were playing on Emerald Street in Barangay Maricaban when they chanced upon what seemed to be a rock wrapped in foil at around 9:40 a.m., police said.

The find turned out to be a pillbox after it exploded while the children were pounding it with rock.

The victims suffered superficial injuries.

Caltex execs shot, wounded in robbery

By Leila B. Salaverria

TWO executives of oil giant Caltex Philippines were shot on Sunday night, one critically, for refusing to yield their cellular phone and other valuables to gun-toting robbers in Makati.

Police identified the victims as Jose G. Sychiuco, 32, a business manager at Caltex, and his wife Nowena B. Sychiuco, 36, a property administrator at the same company. Both are residents of Cattleya Condominium, Pinagbuhatan, Pasig.

Investigation showed that the couple were having dinner at Jugno's Restaurant on Kalayaan Street corner Pililia Street in Makati when three armed men barged into the restaurant at around 10:15 p.m. The restaurant's security guard was unable to ward off the men because he was unarmed.

The suspects then tried to get the couple's 7310 cell phone and Nowena's bag, the Sychiucos being the restaurant's only customers. When the couple resisted and held on to their things, the men shot them.

Jose was shot in the groin with a .9mm pistol while Nowena was shot in the chest with a .45 cal. gun, said P02 Raymund Bilgera. The couple were brought to the Makati Medical Center, where Jose was declared out of danger. Nowena is still in critical condition.

Bilgera said Jose thought the suspects' guns were made of plastic, which is why he fought them off. Unfortunately, Jose was wrong.

The suspects, who were dressed casually in shorts and T-shirts and whom witnesses have described as fair-skinned and good-looking, fled on foot after the incident. They did not rob the restaurant, but police said robbery continues to be the strongest motive for the incident.

MMDA turns to art to fight vandalism

By Leila B. Salaverria

IF YOU find Metro Manila Development Authority personnel painting pictures on posts and walls, don't report them as vandals.

They're the new MMDA "artists" tasked with beautifying the graffiti they find on posts and walls along the main thoroughfares of Metro Manila.

Two 10-member teams have been deployed to look for and transform graffiti since two weeks ago, according to MMDA Traffic Operations Center Director Angelito Vergel de Dios. The teams are also tasked with scrubbing away the remains of posters and are deployed along with clearing operation personnel.

Instead of simply painting over the graffiti, the MMDA "artists" try to improve on it or make it into better artworks. This way, the graffiti won't be so much of an eyesore to passing commuters and pedestrians, said the traffic director.

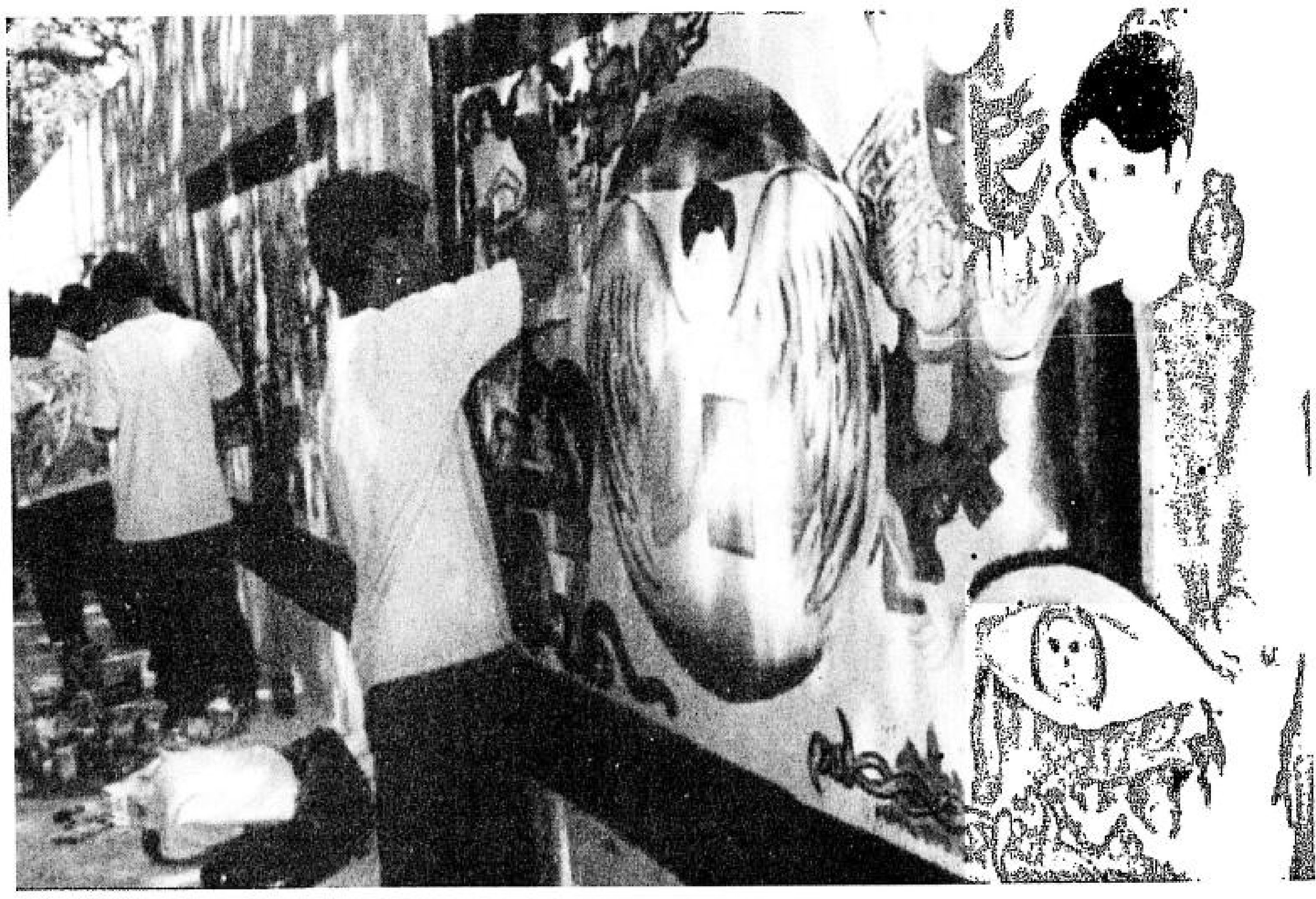
Vergel de Dios also said this is a much better way of countering the vandals who deface walls and posts. When the graffiti has been transformed with the brush strokes of the MMDA artists, the vandals find it hard to paint over it again because the MMDA personnel use bright, colorful paints as opposed to plain, light colored ones that are easy to paint over. The artists are free to choose the designs they want as long as it's not offensive or obscene.

"It's also a way of annoying the vandals and showing them that their 'artworks' won't last long," he said.

The artists sign their masterpieces with the phrase "MMDA art."

"It's to inform the public that the MMDA is working," Vergel de Dios explained.

The traffic director said the areas most prone to vandalism are the walls and posts on Edsa near Camp Crame and the GMA building. But he added that the MMDA artists roam around the metropolis to look for graffiti.



VOLUNTEERS join hands to brighten up city walls, usually smeared with graffiti, by painting bright, colorful scenes.

Traffic cop punches station commander

By Alcuin Papa

A QUEZON City traffic cop faces dismissal after he punched a station commander the other day.

SPO2 Hilario Oralla, 42, of the Central Police District's Traffic Enforcement Group, is facing charges of indiscriminate firing, illegal discharge of his service firearm, direct assault, alarm and scandal, resisting arrest, physical injuries and drug charges.

The charges arose from the suspect's alleged mauling of Supt. Jolly Dizon, station commander of CPD Station 5 in Lagro.

According to initial reports, a drunken Oralla was shooting up his neighborhood in Sitio Namapa, Barangay North Fairview, Quezon City at around 4 p.m. the other day.

A team from the CPD's police station 6 led by Senior Insp. Rene David responded to the incident.

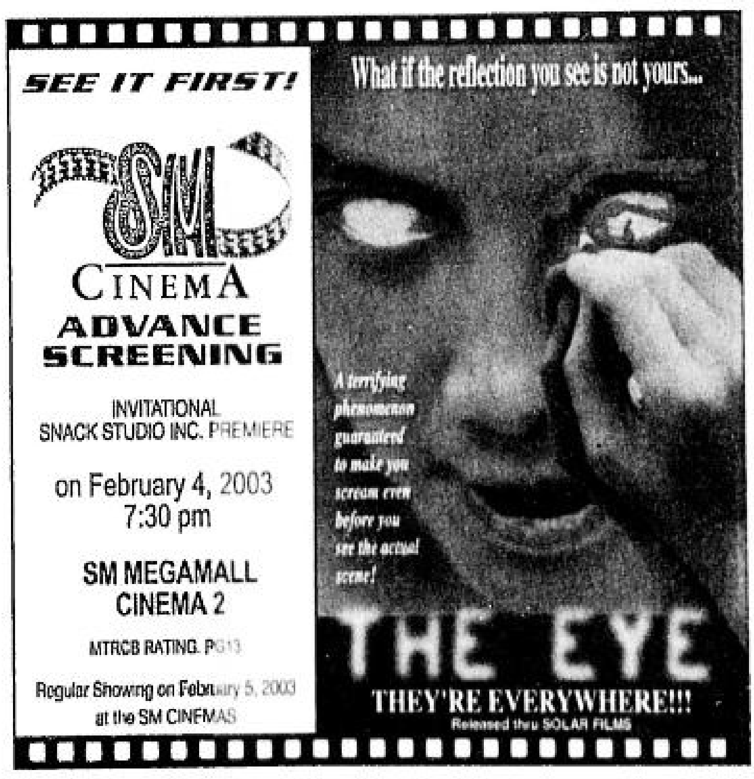
Oralla had a loud argument with David and his men. But David still managed to arrest the suspect.

"*Walang* captain captain *kahit sarhento lang ako papalagan kita*," Oralla screamed while being booked at the Batasan police station.

Oralla was later led to the office of David's superior, Supt. Dizon.

Once inside, Oralla suddenly attacked Dizon, punching him in the face and bloodying his lip. The suspect was then overpowered by other cops and thrown in jail.

Aside from the criminal charges, Oralla is also facing administrative charges which could lead to his dismissal from the force.



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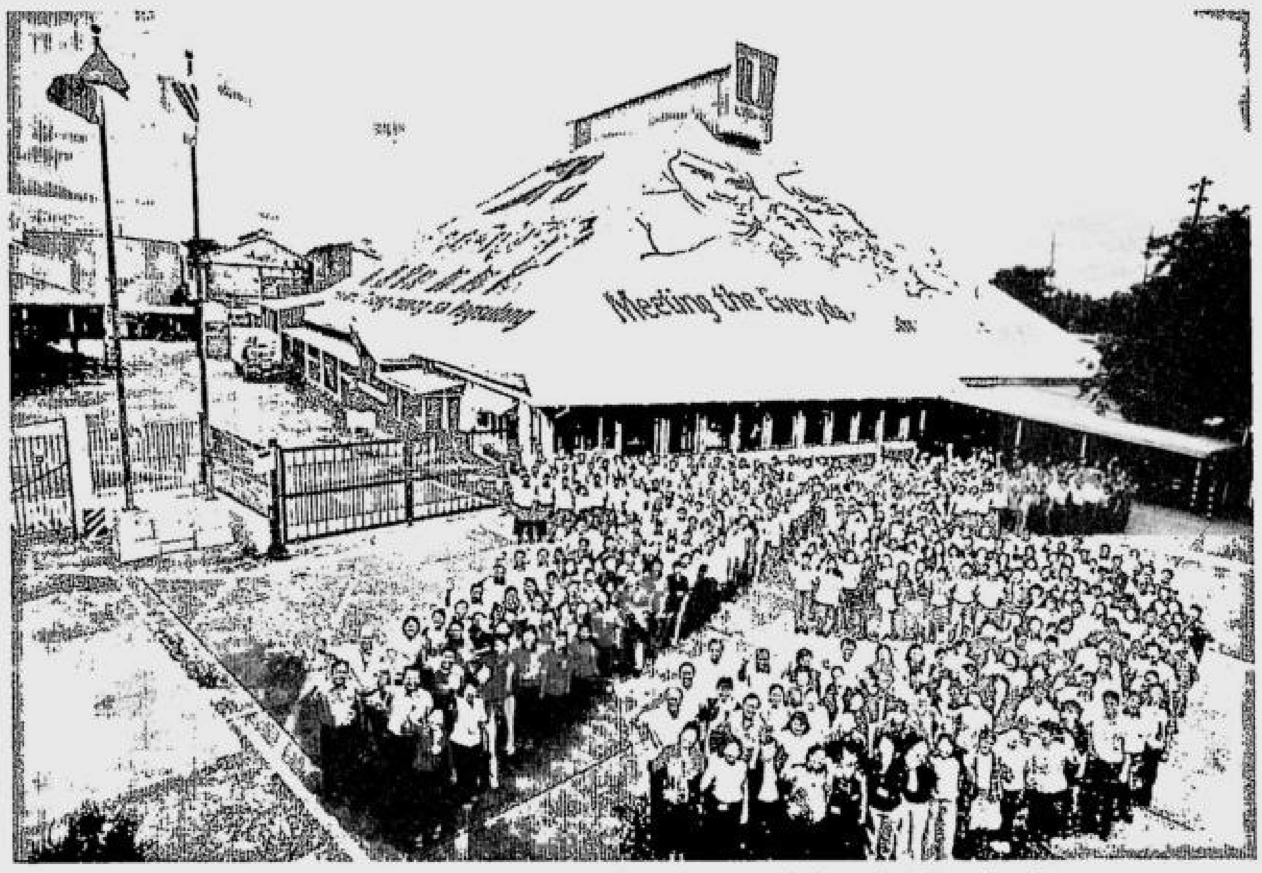
Unilever: 75 years and counting

UNILEVER, maker of popular food, home and personal care products, has been on the forefront of consumer tastes and preferences throughout the years. The former Philippine Refining Company has steered the course of the fast moving consumer goods industry into consumer consciousness and is now continually setting the trend.

However, setting the trend is not its primary goal. As the company speaks of its corporate purpose of 'meeting the everyday needs of people everywhere', it has the consumer as top of mind. The company aims to meet the needs of Aling Fely and Totoy, personifications of the Filipino consumer, for whom the company tailors its products.



Since 1927, Unilever has closely kept tabs on the pulse of consumers and among its celebrated brands is Close-Up, which has remained a trendsetter for the category of oral care. The introduction of this brand gave consumers a preference and a choice, other than setting a pace for toothpaste wars where Unilever has remained as a strong market leader.

Lux and Lifebuoy have been staples in the toilet soap market. Lifebuoy was built as an all-around family soap while Lux was identified as the quality soap ideal for complexion and skin care. Unilever also marked the expansion of its personal care products with the introduction of Sunsilk shampoo, Rexona deodorant, Cream Silk conditioner, Pepsodent toothpaste, Clinic and Impulse. Axe makes the male smelling good all over, Vaseline shampoos' yellow and orange colors shine all over the country, while Pond's and Vaseline Intensive Care Lotion lead in the skin care department.

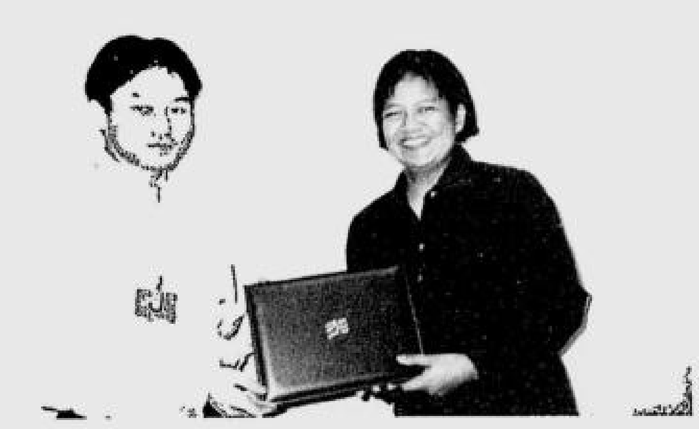
Consumers will also recall the trend that Unilever started for detergents in both powders and bars. Unilever has launched the first environment-friendly detergent bar, Sunlight, in the early 90s and has enjoyed market leadership with the introduction of Superwheel in the 70s. Superwheel marked a turning point in the way multinational companies looked at the Philippine market. Superwheel was developed specifically for the Filipino consumer who preferred to use laundry bars over powders during that time.

Other than the home and personal care segment, Unilever has also set trends in the beverage department with Lipton. In the food business, Selecta Wall's, the joint venture with RFM Corporation set the trend in the ice cream category. While Unilever-Best Foods (also known as California Manufacturing Company) marked the coming together of two companies with "strong market presence, committed to provide quality products and services". Chief among its popular brands is Knorr, with its concept of providing a flavor enhancer that can be easily added to a home-cooked meal without hassle.

Unilever continually aims to be closer to Aling Fely and Totoy and in the dynamics of an ever-changing Filipino preference; Unilever has adjusted to the Filipino consumer in all aspects of its existence. To celebrate and give thanks for its Diamond Year, Unilever in the Philippines will stage a grand show featuring its past and present product endorsers. Watch out for this on Feb. 9 on ABS-CBN!

POPS LIVE IN VANCOUVER

Concert queen Pops Fernandez performs to an expected multi-national audience of some 9,000 people on June 14 at the popular General Motors Place in Vancouver, British Columbia Canada. Entitled 'Pops Fernandez Live in Concert!' and produced by Timothy Entertainment Production Corporation of Canada, the exciting show will have Ai Ai de las Alas, Aiza Seguerra and Troy Montero as guest performers. Photo shows (from left): Vanjie Pinero and Grace Choa, president/CEO and media and advertising director, respectively, of Timothy Entertainment Production Corporation with Pops Fernandez.



PHILIPPINE JAYCEES' PRIDE

Lavinia Peñarverde presents her diploma to Yasushi Ishida of Japan Information and Cultural Center, Embassy of Japan, shortly after her graduation with the degree in Masters in Business Administration from the Graduate school of International Corporate Strategy at Hitotsubashi University in Tokyo, Japan. Peñaverde is the first Filipino Jaycee recipient of the Young Leader's Program (YLP) of the Japanese Ministry of Education. She has also been recognized as one of the Junior Chamber of the Philippines' exceptional members for winning the Outstanding Member of the World in the 1998 JCI World Congress in Manila and Outstanding Chapter President of the World in the 1999 JCI World Congress in Cannes.

BOUTIQUE GRAND OPENING

Aficionado Germany Boutique recently held its grand opening. Central Affirmative Co. Inc. a two year and a half old private company employing almost 300 Filipino employees is proud to claim that aside from 108 Aficionado Germany Eau de Toilette nationwide outlets, Aficionado Germany Boutique has also penetrated the archipelago in a span of four months. The blessing of the boutique took turns from level 2 of Robinsons Bacolod, level 2 of Robinsons Iloilo, level 2 of Ayala Center Cebu, level 2 of Pavillion Mall Laguna, ground floor of Pacific Mall Legazpi City, and ground floor of Fiesta World Mall Lipa City as scheduled. The blessing ceremony invoked the opening with uplifting hopes and stronger vision. Photo shows Aficionado Germany Boutique, Robinsons Bacolod display section with (from left) Mr Remar de Leon, general manager; image models Ms Denille Valmonte and Mr Rex Benedict Arce; and Mr Joel S. Cruz, president and CEO.

Carat Philippines gets a makeover

HAVING pioneered the media specialist business in the Philippines four years ago, Carat has announced plans to take its Philippine operations to the next level.

DOMINGO

Jocelyn F. Domingo has assumed the position of president of Carat Philippines from Rene Diaz, founder and pioneer, who has decided to take early retirement but will continue in an advisory capacity with the company.

Domingo is a well-known and respected personality on the regional media scene with extensive regional advertising and media sales experience. She has worked with some of the leading international advertising agencies and publishing companies in the past 25 years in Hong Kong, Philippines, New York, and most recently, Singapore. Her last stint was with Asiaweek Magazine as VP, advertising sales.

In line with its worldwide mission of being the best media specialist in every country, Carat Asia Pacific is taking this opportunity to thoroughly beef up its Philippine operations to better position itself and efficiently serve its growing list of clients.

Diaz founded Carat Philippines four years ago and has since successfully grown its stable of accounts to include consumer products, electronics, pharmaceuticals, and retail clients.

Kim Walker, regional director, Asia Pacific, with responsibility for the market, said, "Carat Philippines is now ready to move to the next level of growth in the Philippines, and it is for this reason that we are making these changes. Carat Asia Pacific has grown significantly by 46 percent overall the past year against a difficult economic backdrop regionally, and we would like to see the Philippines leverage on this strength as we move forward in 2003 and beyond.

Carat is part of Aegis Group PLC, the world's largest independent media and marketing research group, and is sister company to Synovate (formerly known as AMI).

BITS Clips

Antipolo's Sumaka Festival

AS AN introductory salvo to the Sumaka (suman, mangga at kasuy) Festival in May, Antipolo City participates in DOT's Antipolo Day on Feb. 5 in Intramuros. This is an activity of "Wow Philippines" of the DOT. Antipolo City Mayor Angelito C. Gatlabayan considers the event a prelude to the Sumaka Festival, which is on its second year. Sumaka starts its festivities with the Penitentials Walk for Peace from Quiapo Church to the Antipolo Cathedral April 30 to May 1. The centuries-old Virgen Nuestra Senora y Buenviaje visits Quiapo Church and is then carried by thousands of devotees to the Antipolo Cathedral dawn of May 1.

NLGN biennial confab

THE NATIONAL League of Government Nurses Inc. (NLGN), representing more than 17,000 nurses in various government agencies, offices and health facilities nationwide, will hold its 42nd anniversary and 2003 Biennial Convention on Feb. 4, 5 and 6 at the following venues: Feb. 4, Elim's Center, Victoria Avenue, Quezon City; Feb. 5, Bayview Hotel; Feb. 6, Malacanang Heroes' Hall. This year's theme, "Celebrating the Filipino Government Nurse", pays tribute to Filipino nurses who choose to work locally amidst the enticing demand for Filipino nurses to work abroad. For further inquiries, call the NLGN office at 742-3944.

Aspac honors Ateneo teachers

THE ATENEO Schools Parent Council (Aspac), a duly constituted association of parents of college students, will honor the outstanding teachers for 2002-2003 on Feb. 7 at 4 p.m. at the Escaler Hall, Ateneo de Manila University, Loyola Heights, Quezon City. The theme for the year is "Family and School, Together...A Celebration of Unity and Excellence." Alejandro Roces will be the guest speaker. The honorees are Ricardo H. Mercado, outstanding part-time teacher, Eduardo Jose E. Calasanz, outstanding junior teacher, and Frs. Jaime C. Bulatao SJ and Roque J. Ferriols SJ, outstanding senior teachers. The Aspac was founded by Fr. Raul Bonoan SJ in 1985.

TravelTour Expo 2003 on high gear

PREPARATIONS for the biggest and much-awaited travel event of the year shifts to high gear as exhibitors get ready for the TravelTour Expo 2003. Organized by the Philippine Travel Agencies Association, in cooperation with the Department of Tourism, the three-day travel fair unfolds on Feb. 7 to 9 at Megatrade Halls 1 and 2 of the SM Megamall with 250 booths showcasing the industry's finest tourist destinations, products and services both from the international and domestic travel market.

Now on its 10th year, TTE 2003 will have the theme "Bringing You the World" and promises to be another big event, as all participating airlines, hotels, resorts and cruise liners are coming up with their own special tour packages and unique promotional gimmicks to entice the travel-savvy public. Visitors can look forward to loads of amazing travel discounts, fabulous raffle prizes and a host of challenging and fun-filled activities such as embassy forums, entertainment and games, and cultural presentations as the PTAA endeavors to make this year's Travel Tour Expo another event to remember.

Among those who have signed up for TTE 2003 are international pavilion exhibitors Abacus, Airborne 7, Amadeus Philippines, Ark Travel Express Inc., Asia Pacific Chartering/Jet Airways, Assist Card, Baron Travel, Cathay Pacific, China Airlines, China Travel, China National Tourist Office, Chrislink, Continental Air, Cruise Professional, Cruise Ship Travel, Eidref Travel, Eva Air, Galileo, Garuda Indonesia, Gulf Air, Holland America Line, Horizon Travel, Imex International Travel and Tours, ISI Travel Corp., Hong Kong Tourist Board, Japan Airlines, Las Palmas Tour, Macau government tourist office, Malaysia Airlines, Malaysia Tourism, Nexus/The Marvels of Travel, Marco Polo Hotel, Northwest Airlines, Pan Pacific Travel, Panda Travel Service Inc., Philscan Travel & Tours, Rajah Travel & Tours, Reli Tours & Travel, Royal Brunei Airlines, Shroff International, Singapore Airlines, Spanish Tourism Board, Star Cruises, Tourism Authority of Thailand, Thai Airways, Top Vacation, Transnational Travel & Tours, Tri-C's Travel, Uni Orient, Universal Holidays Inc., Win Travel and Win link Travel.

Participants for the domestic pavilion are Air Philippines, Asian Spirit, Bayview Park Hotel, Blue Cross, Buri Beach, Cebu Pacific, CenCorp, Club Panoly, CP Treasures of the Orient, Crystal Paradise Resort-Palawan, Discovery Suites, Elephant World, Enchanted Kingdom, Horizon Edsa Hotel, Hilton Tower, Legend International Resorts, Lexber Holidays International, Manor Hotel, Nasugbu Tourism Council, Marikina Tourism Office, Ocean Adventure, Olongapo City Council, Pearl of the Pacific, Philippine Tourism Authority, Philippine Retirement Authority, Residence Inn, Sampaguita Vacation, Sea Wind Resort, Shangrila-Mactan, Subic Bay International, Sun Cruises, Sunrise Holiday, Sun Village Resort Boracay, and the Barcelo Hotels and Resorts.

A showcase of travel-related products and services await visitors at the Travel and Shop section reserved by the Asian Art Center, Binas Handicraft, City Office Equipment, ELP Shellcraft Center, Explore Philippines, Fenor Trading, Getzon, Hanimah Pearl, Hinagbuan Cebu's Product, Manila Cigars Inc.-Tabaquiera de Filipina, Marjorie's Best, Pagcor, Precy's Creation, Sage Corp., Sulu Handicraft, Tatak Filipinas, Taytan, United Tourist Promotion and Zambrox Corp.

Relentless in their efforts to rev up tourism in the country, the organizers led by chair Annette Feliciano and co-chair Ricky Ordonez are bent on setting a new benchmark for TTE 2003. Some 52,000 people are expected to show up this year with on-site sales expected to hit P75 million.

TTE 2003 is made possible by its major sponsors Philippine Airlines, the official carrier, BPI, the official credit card, Amadeus Marketing, WG&A Superferry, Globe Handyphone, and Brain Computer Corp., and is supported by media partners Air Sea Guide, Foreign Post, Joey 92.3 FM, Angel Radio DZAR and Travel Update Philippines.

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Schedules are subject to change without prior notice.

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2 RING (ORIG. JAPANESE VERSION)	2 THE HOT CHICK	2 CATCH ME IF YOU CAN 11:30, 2:30, 5:30, 8:30	2 THE LORD OF THE RINGS: TWO TOWERS 1:10 Last Main Feature	2 CATCH ME IF YOU CAN
3 CATCH ME IF YOU CAN	3 CATCH ME IF YOU CAN 11:30, 2:15, 5:00, 7:45, 10:30	Onstage OGIE ALCASID: OA SA PUSO Feb. 7, 8, 13, 14 & 15	3 RING (ORIG. JAPANESE VERSION 12:10, 2:20, 4:30, 6:40 8:50, 11:00	3 THE HOT CHICK
4 MAGNIFICO (ADVANCE SCREENING)	FEMME FATALE		4 THE HOT CHICK 1:50, 4:10, 6:30, 8:50, 11:00	4 THE LORD OF THE RINGS: TWO TOWERS
	5 LORD OF THE RINGS: TWO TOWERS		5 CATCH ME IF YOU CAN 12:10, 3:15, 6:00, 8:45, 11:00	5 BELOW
	6 8 MILE			
	7 BELOW			

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4 GOLD (DTS/ES)	CATCH ME IF YOU CAN
5 GOLD (DOLBY EX)	LORD OF THE RING
6 GOLD (SDDS)	THE RING
7 GOLD (DOLBY EX)	HOT CHICK
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9	EIGHT MILE
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5	
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(Mandaluyong) tel 724.4986

1	FEMME FATALE
2	BELOW
3	MATAMIS HANGGANG DULO
4 (DOLBY DIGITAL EX)	CATCH ME IF YOU CAN
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(Alabang) tel 850.4285

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2	MATAMIS HANGGANG DULO
3	SUKDULAN
4	FEMME FATALE
5	BELOW
6	CATCH ME IF YOU CAN

M star
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1	HALF PAST DEAD
2	HOME ALONG DA RIBER

FCM FAIRVIEW CENTER MALL INC
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1	RESERVE
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3	RESERVE

Sunshine
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1	CATCH ME IF YOU CAN
2	SUKDULAN
3	RESERVE
4	RESERVE

GOTESCO CINEMA

Gotesco City
(Manila) tel 734.8588

1 (SDDS)	CATCH ME IF YOU CAN
4	THE RING
5	TRY SEVENTEEN
6	SUKDULAN
7 (DTS)	BELOW
8 (SDDS)	HOT CHICK
9 (DOLBY)	FEMME FATALE

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2	RESERVE

Gotesco Grand Central
(Caloocan) tel 365.7928

1	FEMME FATALE
2	SUKDULAN
3	SUKDULAN
4 (SDDS)	CATCH ME IF YOU CAN
5	HALF PAST DEAD
6 (DOLBY)	LORD OF THE RING
7 (DTS)	BELOW
8	THE RING
9	MATAMIS HANGGANG DULO

Gotesco Commonwealth
tel 951.0082

1	MATAMIS HANGGANG DULO
2 (SDDS)	BELOW
3 (DTS)	SUKDULAN
4 (DOLBY)	CATCH ME IF YOU CAN
5	THE RING

Gotesco Ortigas
tel 656.6795

1	CATCH ME IF YOU CAN
2	SUKDULAN
3 (DTS)	FEMME FATALE
4	MATAMIS HANGGANG DULO
5 (SDDS)	BELOW

Universal
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1	SUKDULAN

Sampaquita
(Cubao) tel 911.7888

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2	SUKDULAN
3	CATCH ME IF YOU CAN
4	8 MILE

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1 (DOLBY)	CATCH ME IF YOU CAN
2	FEMME FATALE
3	RESERVE
4	SUKDULAN
5	BELOW

FRC Cinema
(Talaba Bacoor Cavite)

1	
2	

Berma Cinema
(Baclaran) tel 879.2030 / 879.2029

1	SHAOLIN SOCCER
2	SUKDULAN

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1	SUKDULAN
2	LOD OF THE RINGS 2
3 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	CATCH ME IF U CAN
4 (SDDS)	FEMME FATALE
5 (DTS)	HOT CHICK
6	TRY SEVENTEEN
7	BELOW

FarmersPlaza CINEMAS
tel 911.3101 loc. 821.8242.8400

1	8 MILE
2	THE RING

CINEMA 2000

Cinema 2000 Target Mall
(Sta. Rosa Laguna)
tel (049) 534.2185, 534.2198

1	THE RING
2	SUKDULAN
3 (DTS)	CATCH ME IF YOU CAN

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7383

1	THE RING
2 (DTS)	SUKDULAN
3 (DOLBY)	CATCH ME IF YOU CAN
4	BELOW

Cinema 2000 Pavilion Mall
(Biñan) tel (049) 411.1146

1	THE SUKDULAN
2 (DOLBY)	BELOW
3 (DTS)	CATCH ME IF YOU CAN
4	THE RING

Cinema 2000 Cinemagix
(Urdaneta) tel(075) 568.6771

1	THE RING
2	TRY SEVENTEEN
3 (DOLBY)	LORD OF THE RING
4	

Cinema 2000 MetroTown
(Tarlac) tel(045) 982.1729

1	MATAMIS HANGGANG DULO
2	TRAPPED
3 (DOLBY)	LORD OF THE RING
4	ANALYZE THAT

Magic Star Cinema
(Tarlac City) tel (045) 611.4305

1 (DOLBY)	LORD OF THE RING
2 (DTS)	MATAMIS HANGGANG DULO
3	ONE HOUR PHOTO

Lianas Cinema
(Alabang) tel 850.1276

1 (SDDS)	LARGADO
2	HAYOP SA GANDA
3 (DTS)	MATAMIS HANGGANG DULO
4	RESERVE

Lianas MovieCity
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7202

1 (DOLBY)	CATCH ME IF YOU CAN
2	REPLIKATE
3 (DTS)	SUKDULAN
4	MATAMIS HANGGANG DULO
5	EIGHT MILE

Olivarez Tri-Cinema
(Biñan) tel (049) 511.8883

1	MATAMIS HANGGANG DULO
2	BELOW
3	CATCH ME IF YOU CAN

Olivarez Los Baños
tel (049) 249.2558

1	BELOW
2	SUKDULAN
3	CATCH ME IF YOU CAN

Mega Center Mall
(Cabanatuan City) tel (044) 463.3283

1	LIKE MIKE
2	THE RING
3 (DTS)	SUKDULAN
4	HALF FAST DEAD

Cabuyao
(Laguna City) tel (049) 531.4808

1 (DTS)	RESERVE
2 (DTS)	RESERVE

Emperor
(Rosario Cavite) tel (046) 438.1657

1	MATAMIS HANGGANG DULO
2	SUKDULAN
3	HALF FAST DEAD

Fiesta World Mall
(Lipa) tel (043) 981.0790

1	BANGKERO
2	REPLICATE
3	SWIM FAN
4	EIGHT MILE

Jade Cinema
(Angeles City) tel (045)887-5001 TO 03

1 (DOLBY EX)	EIGHT MILE
2	SUKDULAN
3 (DTS-ES)	CATCH ME IF YOU CAN
4	SWIM FAN

Cine Nepo Mall
(Angeles City) te (045) 887-0121

1	VAMPS
2	EIGHT MILE
3 (DOLBY)	ANALZE THAT
4	CATCH ME IF YOU CAN

*Movies are subject to change without prior notice

ADVANCED SCREENING THX DOLBY dts SDDS

FESTIVAL SUPERMALL
Level 4
Festival Supermall
Filinvest - Alabang

Tel. 85035-71 to 72

JET LI
英雄
HERO

OPENS TOMORROW!

SM CINEMA
SM Dial-A-Movie Tel. 833-9999
NOW SHOWING

SM CITY BACOOR
4173868

1	8 MILE
2	THE RING (HOLLYWOOD)
3	BELOW
4	CATCH ME IF YOU CAN
5	LOTR: THE TWO TOWERS
6	SUKDULAN
7	FEMME FATALE
8	HOT CHICK

SM CENTERPOINT
7149522 -7161416

1	SUKDULAN
2	THE RING (HOLLYWOOD)
3	BELOW
4	FEMME FATALE
5	CATCH ME IF YOU CAN
6	HALF PAST DEAD
7	LOTR: THE TWO TOWERS
8	TRY SEVENTEEN
9	8 MILE
10	HOT CHICK

SM CITY FAIRVIEW
9350749

1	SUKDULAN
2	HALF PAST DEAD
3	TRY SEVENTEEN
4	LOTR: THE TWO TOWERS
5	8 MILE
6	FEMME FATALE
7	BELOW
8	CATCH ME IF YOU CAN
9	THE RING (HOLLYWOOD)
10	DIE ANOTHER DAY
11	HOT CHICK
12	SUKDULAN

SM CITY MANILA
5239240

1	HOT CHICK
2	RING (JAPANESE)
3	TRY SEVENTEEN
4	CATCH ME IF YOU CAN
5	BELOW
6	CATCH ME IF YOU CAN
7	LOTR: THE TWO TOWERS
8	THE RING (HOLLYWOOD)
9	SUKDULAN
10	MAGNIFICO
11	FEMME FATALE
12	8 MILE

SM MEGAMALL
6331901 • 6329401

1	TWO WEEKS NOTICE
2	RING (JAPANESE)
3	CATCH ME IF YOU CAN
4	LOTR: THE TWO TOWERS
5	BELOW
6	TRY SEVENTEEN
7	8 MILE
8	THE RING (HOLLYWOOD)
9	MAGNIFICO
10	HOT CHICK
11	SUKDULAN
12	FEMME FATALE

SM CITY NORTH EDSA
9295452

1	MAGNIFICO
2	8 MILE
3	HOT CHICK
4	SUKDULAN
5	RING (JAPANESE)
6	CATCH ME IF YOU CAN
7	BELOW
8	LOTR: THE TWO TOWERS

SM SOUTHMALL
8066888

1	8 MILE
2	THE RING (HOLLYWOOD)
3	BELOW
4	MAGNIFICO
5	LONG TIME DEAD
6	TRY SEVENTEEN
7	SUKDULAN
8	CATCH ME IF YOU CAN
9	HOT CHICK
10	LOTR: THE TWO TOWERS

SM CITY CEBU
2313876

1	LOTR: THE TWO TOWERS
2	LOTR: THE TWO TOWERS
3	ANALYZE THAT
4	SWIMFAN
5	8 MILE
6	SUKDULAN
7	THE RING (HOLLYWOOD)
8	LOTR: THE TWO TOWERS

SM CITY ILOILO
3209422

1	CHARLOTTE GRAY
2	CLOSED
3	LOTR: THE TWO TOWERS
4	HALF PAST DEAD
5	THE RING (HOLLYWOOD)
6	LOTR: THE TWO TOWERS
7	CLOSED
8	SUKDULAN

SM CITY PAMPANGA
7128015

1	CATCH ME IF YOU CAN
2	ONE HOUR PHOTO
3	LOTR: THE TWO TOWERS
4	THE RING (HOLLYWOOD)
5	BELOW
6	SUKDULAN

SM SUPER CTR. SUCAT
8294975

1	CATCH ME IF YOU CAN
2	BELOW
3	SUKDULAN
4	THE RING (HOLLYWOOD)

SM CINEMA TUTUBAN
2514302

1	CATCH ME IF YOU CAN
2	BELOW
3	FEMME FATALE
4	SUKDULAN

SM CITY DAVAO
2976998

1	HALF PAST DEAD
2	SUKDULAN
3	MY BIG FAT GREEK WEDDING
4	HOT CHICK
5	CATCH ME IF YOU CAN
6	BELOW

SM BICUTAN
776-3055

1	BELOW
2	SUKDULAN
3	CATCH ME IF YOU CAN
4	THE RING (HOLLYWOOD)

SM CITY CAGAYAN DE ORO
859-2884

1	LOTR: THE TWO TOWERS
2	SUKDULAN
3	ANALYZE THAT
4	LOTR: THE TWO TOWERS

THE PODIUM CINEMA
18 ADB Avenue Ortigas Center Mandaluyong City
633-8976

1	ONE HOUR PHOTO 12:05 FS/12:35 MF/2:40/4:45/6:50/8:55/ 10:30 LFS/11:00 LMF/12:35 END
2	CATCH ME IF YOU CAN 12:00 FS/12:20 MF/3:00/5:40/8:20/ 10:40 LFS/11:00 LMF/1:20 END

LATE NIGHT SCREENING DURING FRIDAYS AND SATURDAYS
Matinee : P100.00 - Screening until 5pm • Monday thru Friday
Regular Rate : P120.00 - After 5pm • Saturday • Sunday • Holidays (Reserved Seating)

Movies are subject to change without prior notice

MOVIEWORLD CINEMAS
@ Robinsons Malls
call-a-movie: 536- 7812
NOW SHOWING

Galleria
632- 9115- 16
633- 7641 loc. 279

THX	CATCH ME IF YOU CAN 10:30 AM (MF); 1:15 PM 4:00 PM; 6:45 & 9:30 LMF
2	CATCH ME IF YOU CAN
3	BELOW
4	FEMME FETALE
5	SUKDULAN
6	LORD OF THE RINGS II
7	8 MILE
8	THE RING (US VERSION)
9	RING (JAPANESE VERSION)
10	HOT CHICK

MATINEE PRICE: P90 THX cinema / P75 1level cinemas
Mon.- Fri. / 10am- 4pm (EXCEPT HOLIDAYS)

Ermita
536 -7809- 12

1	CATCH ME IF YOU CAN
2	FEMME FETALE
3	BELOW
4	RING (JAPANESE VERSION)
5	8 MILE
6	HOT CHICK
7	SUKDULAN

Metro East - Marcos hway
682- 8193 / 8280

1	THE RING (US VERSION)
2	LORD OF THE RINGS II
3	CATCH ME IF YOU CAN
4	BELOW
5	HOT CHICK
6	FEMME FETALE
7	8 MILE
8	SUKDULAN

Novaliches
935- 3229 - 30

1	LORD OF THE RINGS II
2	THE RING (US VERSION)
3	HOT CHICK
4	SUKDULAN
5	FEMME FETALE
6	8 MILE
7	BELOW
8	CATCH ME IF YOU CAN

Malabon Citisquare
288-0985 / 288-2575

1	MATAMIS HANGGANG DULO
2	CATCH ME IF YOU CAN
3	SUKDULAN
4	FEMME FATALE

Star Mills- Sn. Fernando, Pamp
875- 1927
961- 5318 / 5270

1	THE RING (US VERSION)
2	SUKDULAN
3	ANALYZE THAT
4	BELOW
5	CATCH ME IF YOU CAN
6	HOT CHICK

Imus
471- 8188 / 875- 3838

1	FEMME FETALE
2	8 MILE
3	BELOW
4	THE RING (US VERSION)
5	CATCH ME IF YOU CAN
6	SUKDULAN

Sta. Rosa Laguna
049-8370907

1	CATCH ME IF YOU CAN
2	BELOW
3	SUKDULAN
4	THE RING (US VERSION)
5	ONE HOUR PHOTO

Bacolod
441- 0453 / 0459

1	LORD OF THE RINGS II
2	BELOW
3	LORD OF THE RINGS II
4	HALF PAST DEAD
5	THE RING (US VERSION)
6	8 MILE

Iloilo
336- 8077 - 78

1	LORD OF THE RING II
2	HALF PAST DEAD
3	SUKDULAN
4	LORD OF THE RING II
5	CHARLOTTE GRAY
6	THE RING (US VERSION)

MOVIES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE.

Unilever celebrates 75 years with grand reunion of talents

MOST of us have grown up using products that have been brought into our homes by our favorite celebrities, if not by fresh faces that show just what benefits those products can give us.

Do you remember Sen. Loren Legarda flashing that same warm smile in a Close-Up TV commercial some years back?

Rep. Miguel Zubiri, Mark Gil, Gabby Concepcion, William Martinez, Tonton Gutierrez, Dawn Zulueta, Dindi Gallardo and Cheska Diaz all helped show how those teen moments can be managed with whiter teeth and fresh breath.

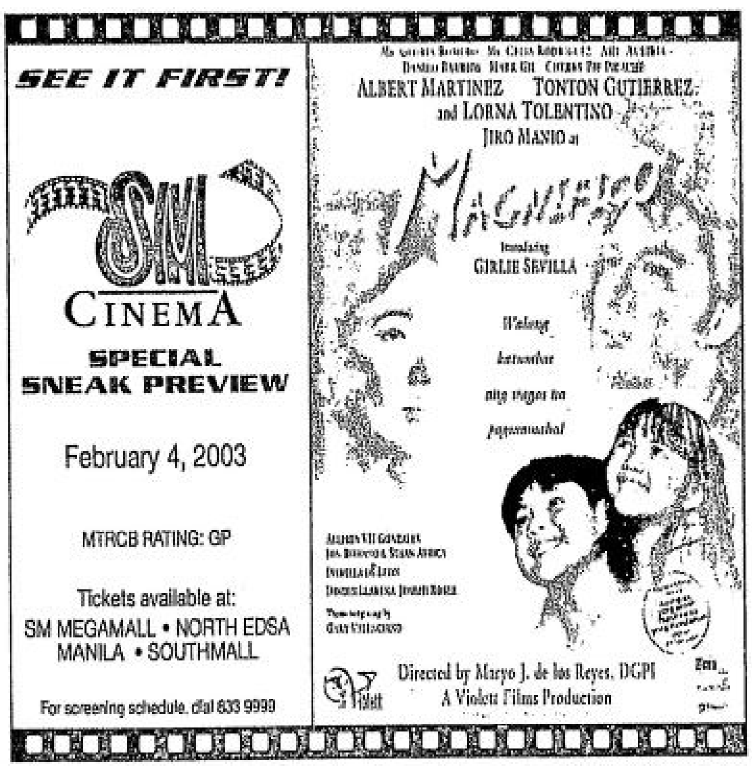
Through the years, Lux has been known to celebrate beauty with the likes of Amalia Fuentes, Susan Roces, Helen Gamboa, Gina Pareño, Vilma Santos, Gloria Diaz, Hilda Koronel, Margie Moran-Florendo, Kuh Ledesma, Pops Fernandez, Lucy Gomez, Carmina Villaroel and Kris Aquino, with world-renowned actresses Bridget Bardot, Claudia Cardinale, Jane Fonda, Sophia Loren, Julie Christine, Michelle Pfeiffer, Catherine Zeta-Jones and Natasha Kinski, to name a few.

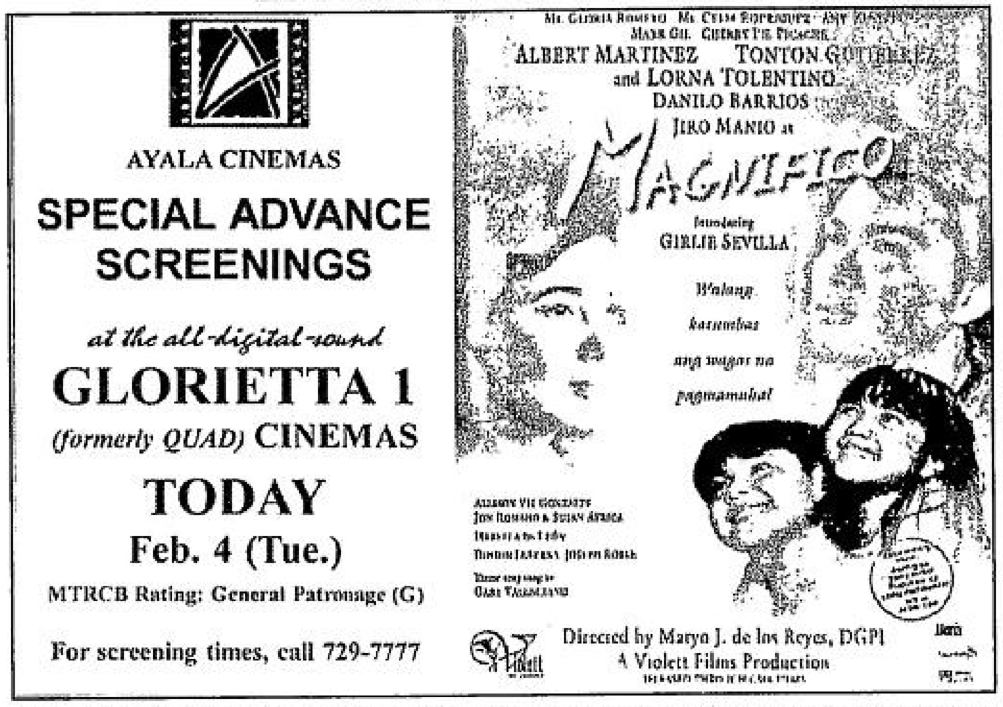
And who can forget names like Lumen and one-liners like "mag-patuka na lang sa ahas" by Elizabeth Ramsey or "parang bebelgem" by Modesta dela Cruz (in a Pepsodent toothpaste man-on-the-street TV ad)?

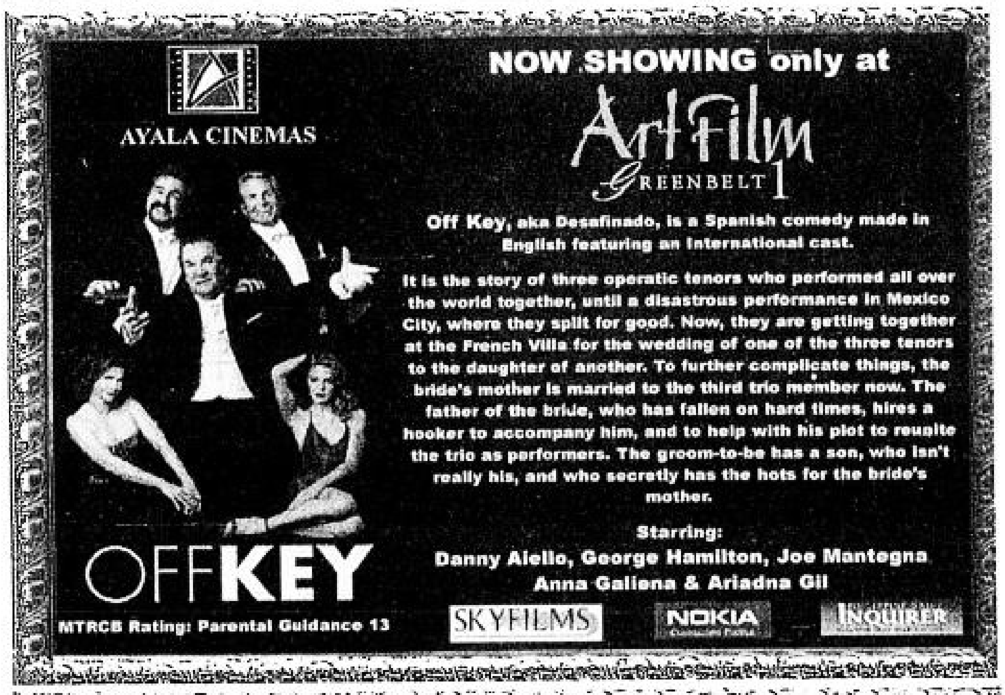
This year, Unilever Philippines celebrates 75 years of being on the forefront of consumer tastes and preferences by bringing together the celebrities and talents that have come to bring these products closer to our hearts.

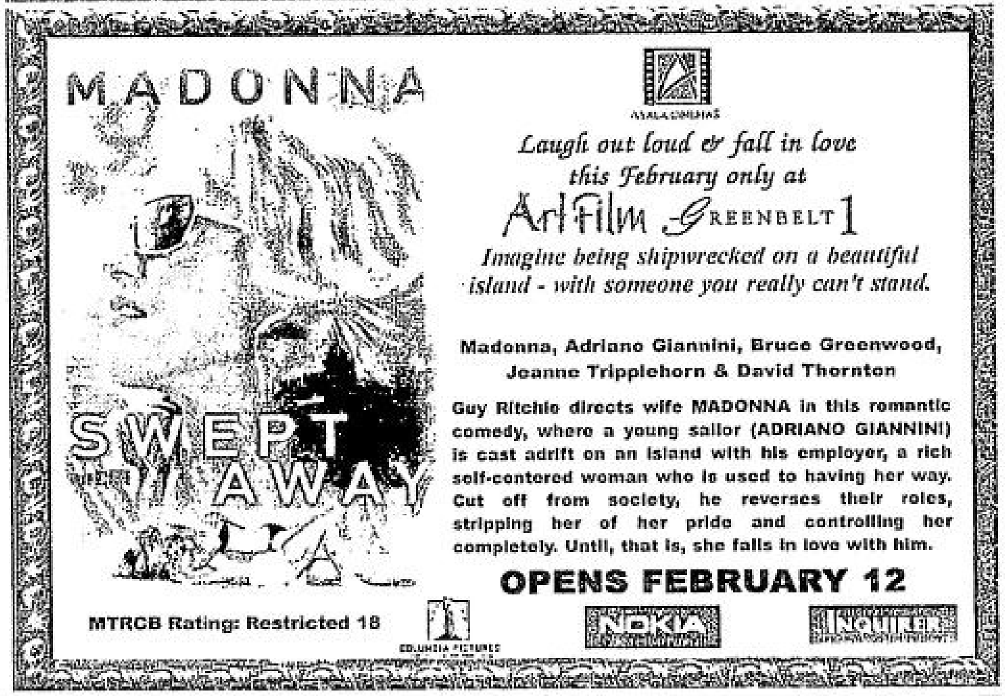
The grand show today to be produced by ABS-CBN, will feature past highlights performed and presented by stars of today, and will have the much admired endorsers of the past together for a grand reunion.

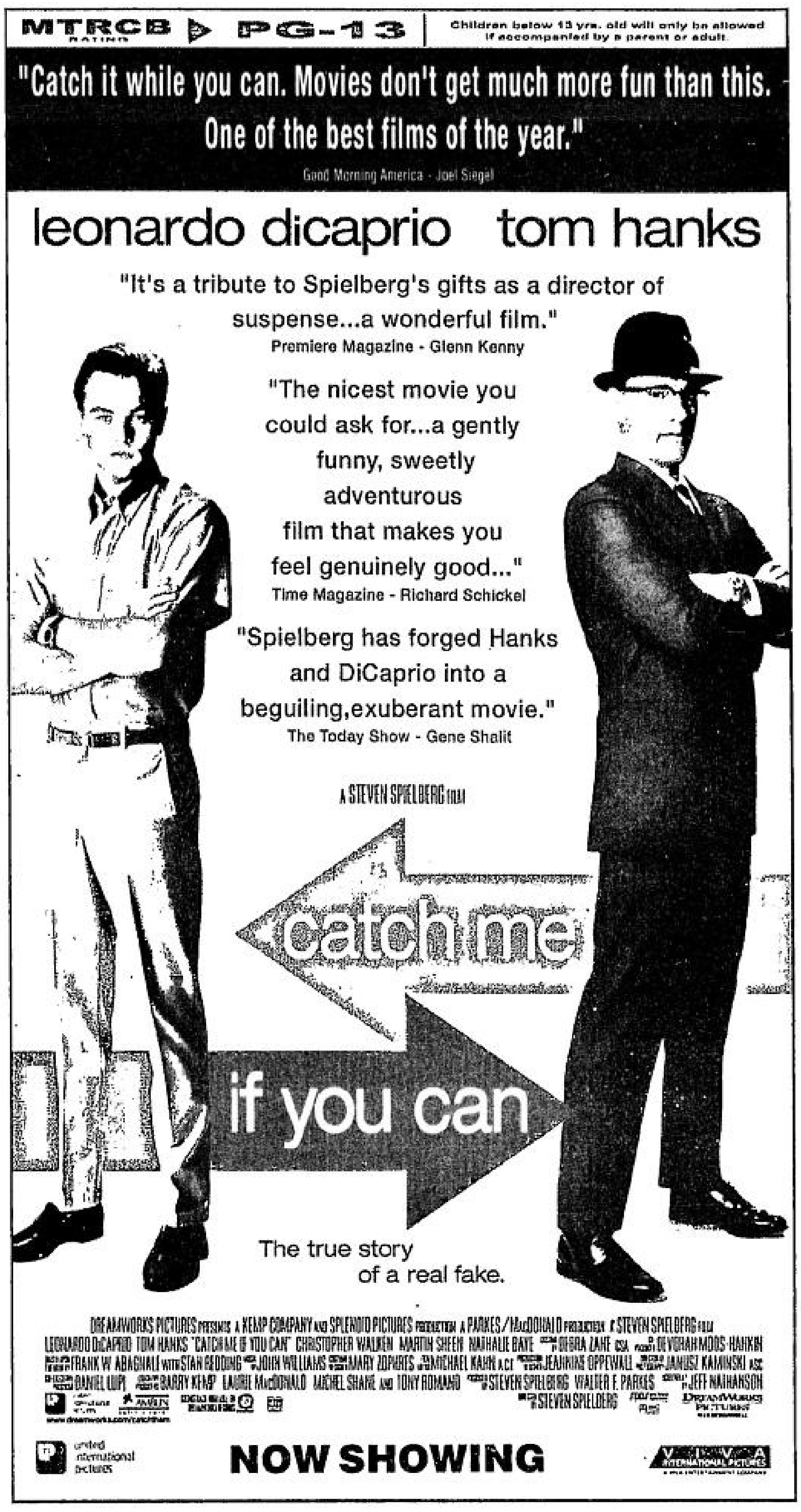
The special will be aired on ABS-CBN on Sunday, Feb. 9. It is Unilever's way of thanking the talents that helped bring their popular foods, personal and home care products closer to the public, and the consumers who have helped them meet their corporate purpose of meeting the everyday needs of people everywhere.

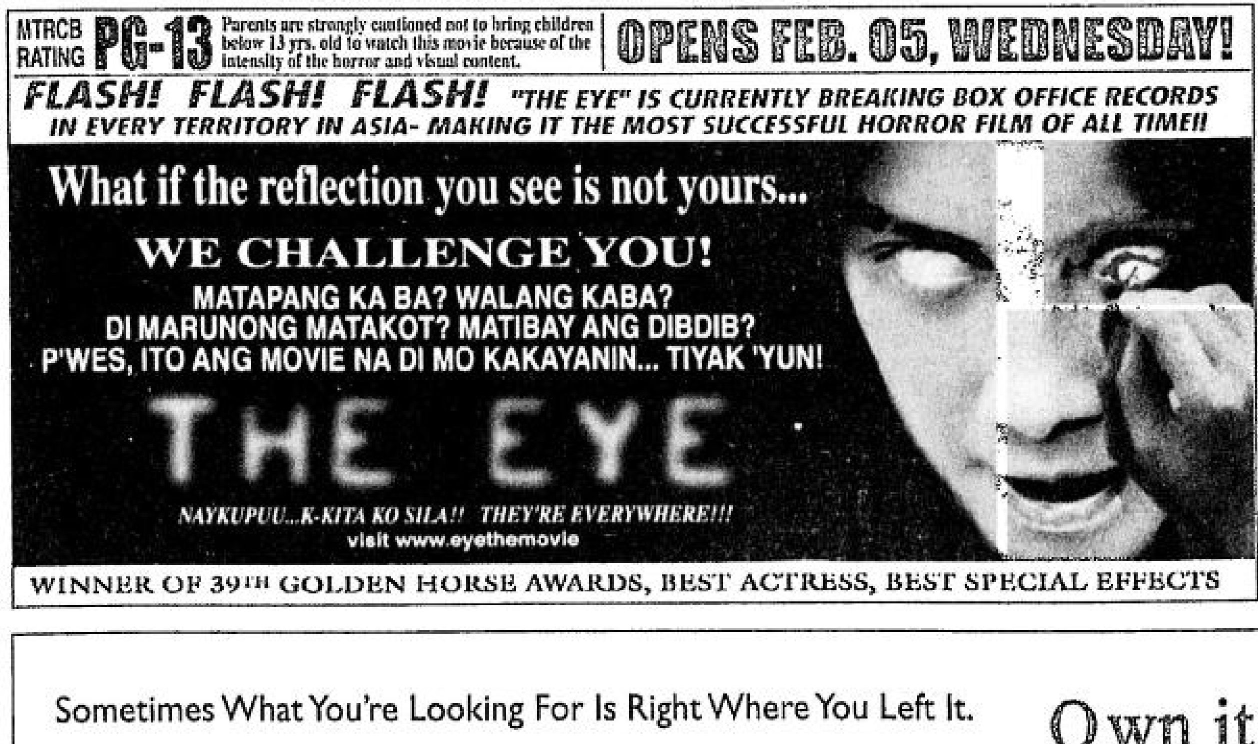

SEE IT FIRST!
SM CINEMA
SPECIAL SNEAK PREVIEW
February 4, 2003
MTRCB RATING: GP
Tickets available at:
SM MEGAMALL • NORTH EDSA
MANILA • SOUTHMALL
For screening schedule, dial 633 9999
ALBERT MARTINEZ TONTON GUTIERREZ
and LORNA TOLENTINO
JIRO MANIO as
MAGNIFICO
Introducing GIRLIE SEVILLA
Walang katumbas ang ingat na pagmamahal
Directed by Maryo J. de los Reyes, DGPI
A Violett Films Production

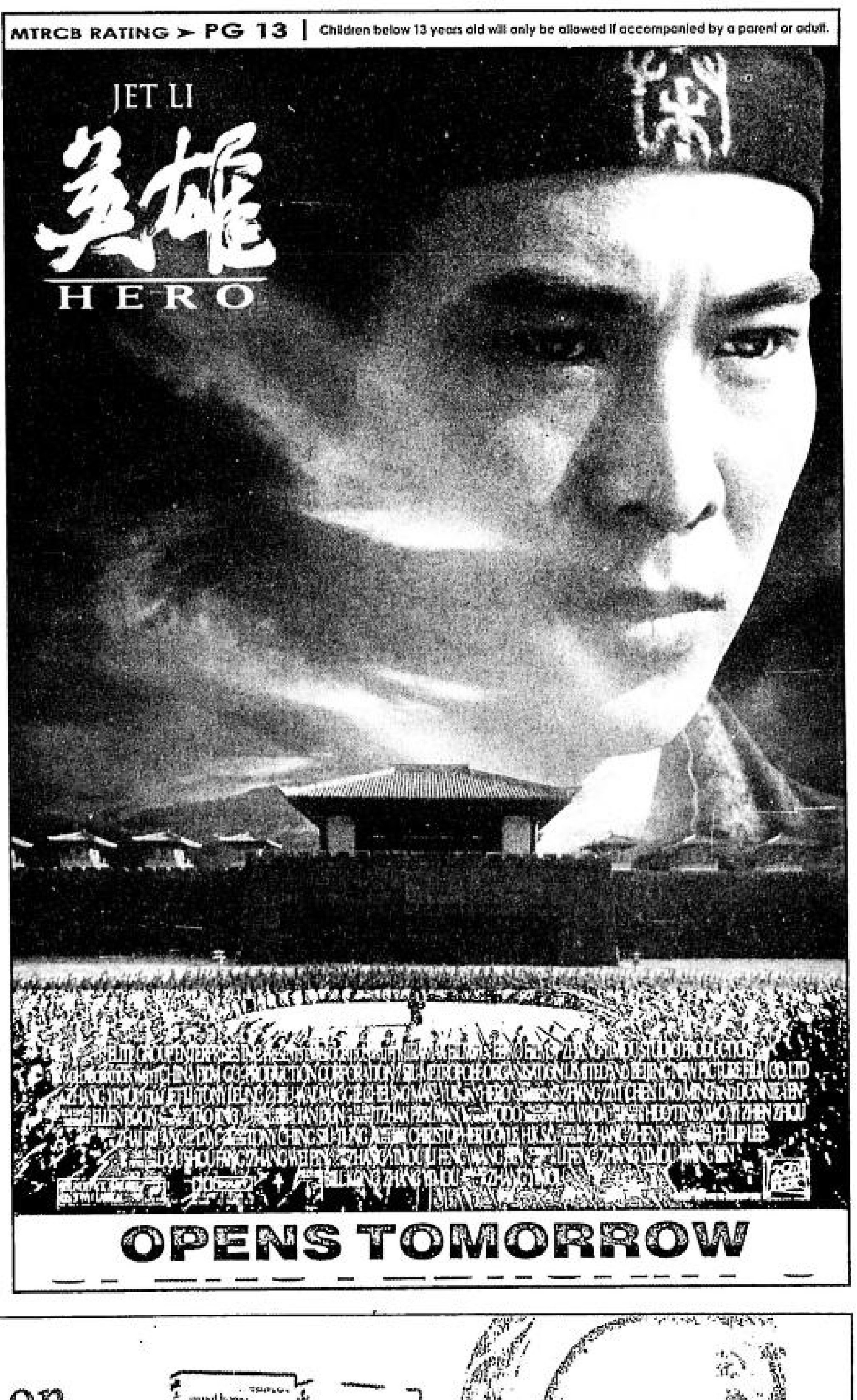

AYALA CINEMAS
SPECIAL ADVANCE SCREENINGS
at the all-digital-sound
GLORIETTA 1
(formerly QUAD) CINEMAS
TODAY
Feb. 4 (Tue.)
MTRCB Rating: General Patronage (G)
For screening times, call 729-7777
ALBERT MARTINEZ TONTON GUTIERREZ
and LORNA TOLENTINO
DANILO BARRIOS
JIRO MANIO as
MAGNIFICO
Introducing GIRLIE SEVILLA
Walang katumbas ang ingat na pagmamahal
Directed by Maryo J. de los Reyes, DGPI
A Violett Films Production


AYALA CINEMAS
NOW SHOWING only at
ArtFilm Greenbelt 1
Off Key, aka Desafinado, is a Spanish comedy made in English featuring an international cast.
It is the story of three operatic tenors who performed all over the world together, until a disastrous performance in Mexico City, where they split for good. Now, they are getting together at the French Villa for the wedding of one of the three tenors to the daughter of another. To further complicate things, the bride's mother is married to the third trio member now. The father of the bride, who has fallen on hard times, hires a hooker to accompany him, and to help with his plot to reunite the trio as performers. The groom-to-be has a son, who isn't really his, and who secretly has the hots for the bride's mother.
Starring:
Danny Aiello, George Hamilton, Joe Mantegna
Anna Galiena & Ariadna Gil
OFFKEY
MTRCB Rating: Parental Guidance 13
SKYFILMS NOKIA INQUIRER


MADONNA
SWEPT AWAY
AYALA CINEMAS
Laugh out loud & fall in love this February only at
ArtFilm Greenbelt 1
Imagine being shipwrecked on a beautiful island - with someone you really can't stand.
Madonna, Adriano Giannini, Bruce Greenwood, Jeanne Tripplehorn & David Thornton
Guy Ritchie directs wife MADONNA in this romantic comedy, where a young sailor (ADRIANO GIANNINI) is cast adrift on an island with his employer, a rich self-centered woman who is used to having her way. Cut off from society, he reverses their roles, stripping her of her pride and controlling her completely. Until, that is, she falls in love with him.
OPENS FEBRUARY 12
MTRCB Rating: Restricted 18
COLUMBIA PICTURES NOKIA INQUIRER


MTRCB RATING ▷ PG-13 | Children below 13 yrs. old will only be allowed if accompanied by a parent or adult.
"Catch it while you can. Movies don't get much more fun than this. One of the best films of the year."
Good Morning America - Joel Siegel
leonardo dicaprio tom hanks
"It's a tribute to Spielberg's gifts as a director of suspense...a wonderful film."
Premiere Magazine - Glenn Kenny
"The nicest movie you could ask for...a gently funny, sweetly adventurous film that makes you feel genuinely good..."
Time Magazine - Richard Schickel
"Spielberg has forged Hanks and DiCaprio into a beguiling,exuberant movie."
The Today Show - Gene Shalit
A STEVEN SPIELBERG FILM
catch me if you can
The true story of a real fake.
united international pictures
NOW SHOWING


MTRCB RATING PG-13 Parents are strongly cautioned not to bring children below 13 yrs. old to watch this movie because of the intensity of the horror and visual content.
OPENS FEB. 05, WEDNESDAY!
FLASH! FLASH! FLASH! "THE EYE" IS CURRENTLY BREAKING BOX OFFICE RECORDS IN EVERY TERRITORY IN ASIA- MAKING IT THE MOST SUCCESSFUL HORROR FILM OF ALL TIME!!
What if the reflection you see is not yours...
WE CHALLENGE YOU!
MATAPANG KA BA? WALANG KABA?
DI MARUNONG MATAKOT? MATIBAY ANG DIBDIB?
P'WES, ITO ANG MOVIE NA DI MO KAKAYANIN... TIYAK 'YUN!
THE EYE
NAYKUPUU...K-KITA KO SILA!! THEY'RE EVERYWHERE!!!
visit www.eyethemovie
WINNER OF 39TH GOLDEN HORSE AWARDS, BEST ACTRESS, BEST SPECIAL EFFECTS


MTRCB RATING ➤ PG 13 | Children below 13 years old will only be allowed if accompanied by a parent or adult.
JET LI
英雄
HERO
OPENS TOMORROW

Sometimes What You're Looking For Is Right Where You Left It.
REESE WITHERSPOON
SWEET HOME ALABAMA
Own it on ORIGINAL VHS, VCD and DVD VIDEO!
VHS / VCD P 250 DVD P 750
© Buena Vista Home Entertainment, Inc.
AVAILABLE AT THE FF. OUTLETS: VIDEO CITY • ASTROVISION • ASTROPLUS • SM RECORD BAR • ODYSSEY • NATIONAL BOOKSTORE • TOWER • LANDMARK • O MUSIC • MUSIC ONE • SHOPWISE EVER DEPARTMENT STORE • SM APPLIANCE CENTER • SM SUPERMARKET • MAKRO • AMERICAN HOME VIDEO • SPECTRA • ACA • 7-ELEVEN • VVI SHANGRI-LA KIOSK and other VIVA VIDEO OUTLETS

Boob-tube booboos

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

HOST: Here's our question for our next finalist: Would you rather be an *artista*, or a politician?

Finalist: I want to become an artist, not a politician.

Host: Please explain your answer.

Finalist: Well, as an artist you have to reach above others in order to success what you have to do!

(*Ay*, success!)

***

Host: The food in your restaurant is great!

Owner: Thank you!

Host: What is the specialty of the house?

Owner: No, the restaurant is not in our house?

(No comment!)

***

Host: Who does the cooking in your restaurant?

Chef: I do, but I have also trained others.

Host: So, you first studied abroad—?

Chef: Yes, I learned the best cooking techniques from foreigners, then I scattered it among my own people!

(*Ay*, scattered!)

***

Host: Why are you opposing the extradition?

Guest: Believe me, I'm not doing this for him alone, but for all Filipinos who might experienced the experiences that he has experienced!

(That's a lot of—experience!)

***

Host: *Sino ang mga tinutulungan ng* group *ninyo dito sa* halfway house *ninyo*?

Guest: *Yung iba, medyo nalulong sa hindi magandang bisyo.*

(*May bisyo bang maganda?!*)

***

Host: *Ano ang* feeling *mo ngayong malapit mo nang makita ang* husband *mo*, after three years abroad?

Guest: Exacted *na nga akong makita siya*!

(*Ay*, exacted!)

***

Host: *Batiin mo naman ang kaibigan mo sa natanggap niyang award!*

Guest: To my good friend, congratulation for your contribution!

(*Tipid mo, ha?*)

***

Host: I like your glasses!

Guest: Yeah, special *nga—ito ang* eyeglasses *na ginagamit kong panglakad.*

(*Sa pagbasa naman, ano'ng ginagamit mo —sapatos?*)

***

Host: Your vegetables are so fresh!

Guest chef: They have to be—that's the secret of good vegetarian cooking. Look how beautiful the carrots—smell the taste!

(I'm trying... I'm trying!)

***

Host: How many dogs do you have at home?

Guest: For security, *meron akong* doberman, *pero* which is *nandoon ang anak niya.*

(*Ano daw?*)

***

Host: Will the victim of the shooting be operated on?

Field reporter: Yes, just in case he does not die in the wound.

(You're a field reporter?!)

Focus on Nia

WE went to see "Half Past Dead" recently to find out how Fil-American actress Nia Peeples did in the plum role of a feisty, high-kicking action star. This was going to be a big stretch for her, because she first made it in US show biz as a TV performer who used her hosting rather than her martial-arts skills to hold viewers' attention.

Well, when we saw her in "Half Past Dead," we hardly recognized her. On TV, she was rather plump and sweet; on the other hand, in her first action film, she was lean, mean and full of ornery attitude.

Nia must have lost 20 pounds to get ready for the fight scenes and stunts that she had to perform her **Steven Seagal** starrer. Well, her determination and long preparation paid off because she's entirely credible as a female action star.

Otherwise, her role doesn't really ask her to do much, so her good showing in "Half Past Dead" will probably get her more action roles, and not much else.

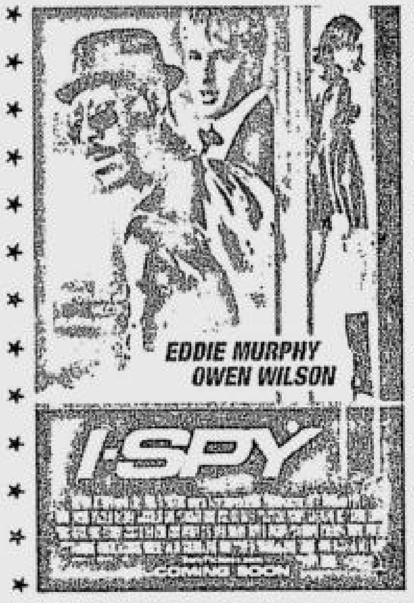
She's also transformed herself so completely that there's little that's Filipino left in her looks, form and actions. She comes across much more like a Mexican spitfire with killer fists and nothing but mayhem on her mind.

Nia Peeples as a Fil-American talent? Alas, now only nominally...

SNEAK PREVIEW!
SM MANILA, ROBINSONS MALATE, SM MEGAMALL, GLORIETTA, FESTIVAL MALL, SM SOUTHMALL, GOTESCO CITY

Ms. Gloria Romero Ms. Celia Rodriguez Amy Austria
Danilo Barrios Mark Gil Cherry Pie Picache
Albert Martinez Tonton Gutierrez
and Lorna Tolentino
Jiro Manio as
Magnifico
Introducing
Girlie Sevilla
Walang katumbas ang wagas na pagmamahal
Allison VII Gonzales
Jon Romano & Susan Africa
Isabella de Leon
Dindin Llarena Joseph Roble
Theme song sung by:
Gary Valenciano
Directed by Maryo J. de los Reyes, DGPI
A Violett Films Production
RELEASED THROUGH GMA FILMS

ROBINSONS MOVIEWORLD
SPECIAL ADVANCE SCREENING



I SPY
FEBRUARY 4, 2003
TUESDAY, 7:30 PM
@
ROBINSONS MOVIEWORLD GALLERIA
CINEMA 2
THIS MAGIC 89.9 PREMIERE
IS STRICTLY INVITATIONAL
REGULAR SCREENING IS ON FEBRUARY 5, 2003
ROBINSONS MOVIEWORLD PREPAID MOVIECARDS
AVAILABLE AT ALL ROBINSONS CINEMA BRANCHES

Araneta Center ENTERTAINMENT GUIDE

ALI MALL CINEPLEX 7	
Ali 1	SUKDULAN
Ali 2	LOD OF THE RINGS 2
Ali 3	CATCH ME IF U CAN
Ali 4	FEMME FATALE
Ali 5	HOT CHICK
Ali 6	TRY SEVENTEEN
Ali 7	BELOW
FARMERS PLAZA CINEMAS	
Farmers I	8 MILE
Farmers 2	THE RING
ARANETA COLISEUM	
FEB 3 & 5	NCA 7 COCK DERBY
FEB 8	LANI MISALUCHA CONCERT
FEB 15	ABBA TRIBUTE CONCERT
ELEPHANT WORLD	
FEB 4	10 PM / 3 PM
FEB 5	10 AM / 3 PM
FEB 6	10 AM / 3 PM

POWER PLANT CINEMA

Rockwell Center, Makati City Tel. No: 8981440-41

ANALYZE THAT P13 1:30,3:35,5:40, 7:45,9:50	FEMME FATALE R18 11:30,2:00,4:30, 7:00,9:30	CATCH ME IF YOU CAN P13 12:40,3:30, 6:20,9:15
HOT CHICK P13 12:40, 3:00, 5:20, 7:40, 10:00	BELOW P13 12:00, 2:15, 4:30, 6:45, 9:00	CATCH ME IF YOU CAN P13 11:10,2:00,4:50, 7:40,10:30

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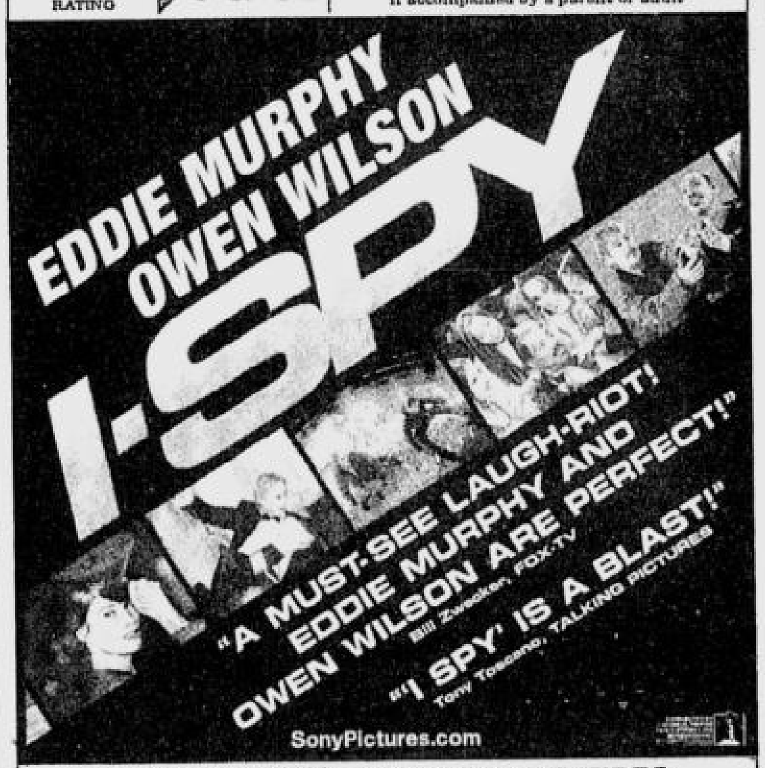

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Tony Toscano, TALKING PICTURES
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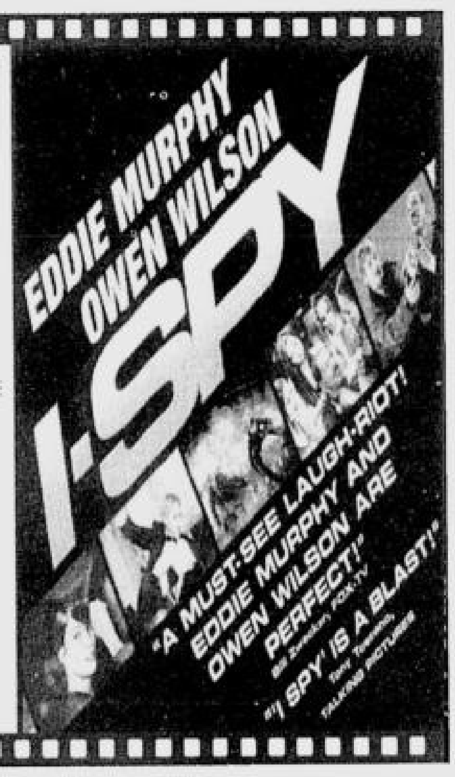

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THEATER MOVIE GUIDE

MANILA	
EASTERN	
MAXIM	CLOSED
MIRAMAR	BIYAHERA / POSSESSION
ODEON	FEMME FATAL
ODEON-2	SAMBAHIN ANG PURI / TUKAAN
ROBEN	SUKDULAN
TANDEM-1	SUGAT
TANDEM-2	KATAWAN MO LANGIT KO
TIMES	RED DRAGON / TRAP
QUEZON CITY	
ACT-1	SENSUAL ISLAND
ACT-2	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
ACT-3	ORIGINAL SIN
ACT-4	HANGGANG KAILAN KA PAPATAY
CORONET A	SUKDULAN
CORONET B	DERAILED / BLISS FOR PLEASURE
QUEZON-1	MATAMIS HANGGANG DULO
REMAR	SUKDULAN
REMAR-2	MATAMIS HANGGANG DULO
NOVA MALL - NOVALICHES CINEMA	
A	SUKDULAN
B	
C	
MANDALUYONG CITY	
SHANGRI-LA PLAZA MALL	635-20-79 / 633-78-51 TO 70
CINEMA-1	UK FILM FESTIVAL
CINEMA-2	CATCH ME IF YOU CAN
CAINTA RIZAL	
STA. LUCIA EAST	(681-5401 TO 19)
CINEMA-1	TRY SEVENTEEN
CINEMA-2	MATAMIS HANGGANG DULO
CINEMA-3	8 MILE
CINEMA-4 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	LORD OF THE RINGS 2
CINEMA-5 (DTS)	ONE HOUR PHOTO
CINEMA-6	LASTIKMAN
CINEMA-7	BANGKERO
CINEMA-8	CATCH ME IF YOU CAN
CINEMA-9 (DTS)	CATCH ME IF YOU CAN
CINEMA-10 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	BELOW
CINEMA-11 (SDDS)	FEMME FATALLE
CINEMA-12	SUKDULAN
CINEMA-14	HOT CHICK
CINEMA-15	THE RING
LORES	
CINEMA-2	SENSUAL ISLAND
CINEMA-3	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
NE CINEMAGIC - CABANATUAN	
CINEMA 1	DIE ANOTHER DAY
CINEMA 2	BAHID
CINEMA 3	HARRY POTTER
CINEMA 4	CHANGING LANES
UNIWIDE COASTAL MALL	
(PARAÑAQUE)	SENSUAL ISLAND
CINEMA-1	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
CINEMA-2	MEN IN BLACK II
CINEMA-4	SELDA

OPENS TOMORROW!
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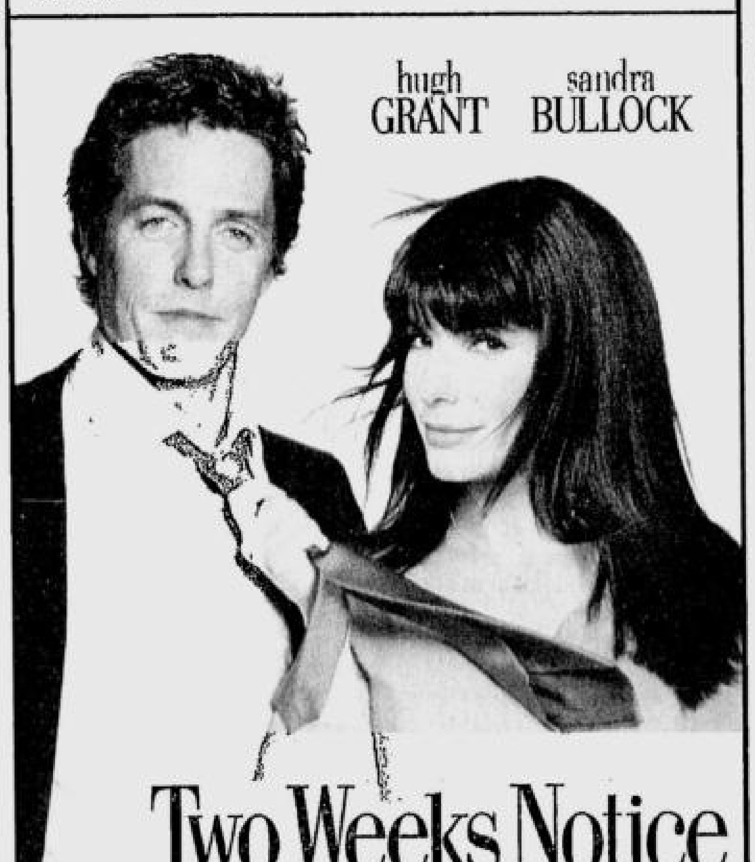

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ENTERTAINMENT

Editor Louie C. Camino

Martin and Pops without the romance

THREE YEARS after their very public 12-year-old marriage was annulled, five years after they actually started to spend separate lives, and seven years after they performed in the same show as a couple, Martin Nievera and Pops Fernandez are back together again. At least on stage.

Q & A

The romance may not be there anymore, but their on-stage chemistry remains. That chemistry was very evident when they did a duet of "Kahit Isang Saglit," through the wonders of microwave technology, in the middle of their shows—his at the PICC and hers at Ultra—one night close to Christmas 2002.

Martin and Pops will again stir things up with that chemistry in several shows produced by Maxi-Media International: Feb. 15 at the Waterfront Hotel in Cebu City, Feb. 21 and 22 at the Araneta Coliseum, March 1 at the Freedom Ring in Clark, Pampanga, as well as in 16 major cities in the US and Canada in the last quarter of 2003.

The show is called "Martin and Pops in Concert." No billing problems?

Pops: It has always been like that, even without a show or without falling in love again. Billing was never a problem to us then, so why should it be a problem now?

Martin: What would you rather call our concert? The names alone are enough. We were able to sell shows then, more so now. We were married, we separated and now we're doing a concert.

The Martin and Pops magic was very much alive when you sang together last December.

M: You can leave us alone and we'll know what to do. That's the beauty of us being together. We can joke together, laugh together. The magic will still be there. We understand each other better. We know when to start and when to stop.

If the audience saw us only on screen through microwave last December, now they will see us live.

P: It's really different when we perform together. Even without falling in love again, there's the magical chemistry. I believe only Martin and I can do something like that.

M: We're the original love team onstage when it comes to back-to-back shows. I'm very excited, too, and I'm looking forward to reconnecting to the tandem that we had.

What makes us different from other teams is there's sincerity in what we do. Not that there was insincerity when I performed with Lani (Misalucha) or Regine (Velasquez). But with them, we had to choose a song that's tailor-made for us.

With Pops and me, it doesn't matter, it can be just another song and we can harmonize together, joke around and perform.

P: Our edge is that we have that magic, the one that we discovered years ago on "Penthouse Live." That was how it started. You can just leave us there and we'll know exactly what to do.

Many of your followers could be expecting a reconciliation with this show.

M: The possibility of a reconciliation is not a selling point of our concert.

P: We don't want to fool anybody. The people who want to watch will go there to see us perform together.

At this point, it's hard to say yes, we're going back to each other's arms, and it's also hard to say no. The problem before, even when we were still doing "Penthouse Live," was that everybody always wanted us to stay together. We did fall for each other. The sad thing is our relationship was so public.

Everything that happened in our lives, from the wedding to the first baby, even the whole breakup, was so public and we had no control over it.

Now, let us enjoy our working relationship first. Let's not jump into anything or try to question the possibility of a reconciliation or what will happen after this. Martin and I are both happy that we have hurdled a lot of things. We have overcome our problems, a lot of anger, pain and bitterness. We have taken it a step farther and that's where we are now, working together and being able to be friends.

Even without the romance, we realized we still enjoy working together.

M: Things are different now. I say less, she says more (laughs). But seriously, we're not trying to get back or be with each other in any way. We're happy with the way things are going now. If we would attempt to reconcile at this point, there would be a lot of strain because I'm seeing someone and Pops might be seeing someone, too.

If we ever consider getting back together again, it will be a major issue because we're asking the family to be complete again.

So how's your relationship now?

M: We're perfectly okay. We're good friends. We've remained the kind of friends we've always been. I support Pops. She supports me. Texting is the best. You don't have to be physically there to wish her luck or congratulate her or to see if she's okay. When I'm not in town, Pops always asks me if there's anything she can do for me before I arrive. "Can I arrange for your pick-up?" she would ask me. I do the same for her. We still have that same concern for each other. We have a special kind of love in our friendship. That's good.

What made you agree to finally perform together again?

P: Times are hard (laughs). We both need the money.

M: We're both ready to work together. We don't fight anymore. We're both mature not to let the intrigues affect us anymore. We know how to handle the intrigues now.

Will each of you sing a special song to the other in the concert?

M: That's a good idea. (To Pops) We should do that. Let's keep it a secret. Don't tell me and I won't tell you that we each have prepared a song. Only Louie Ocampo and the band should know. During the show, I'll sing it for you. The song should tell how I feel about you and you about me.

P: You might not like my song.

M: Whatever. It can be a thriller and I won't mind. Wouldn't it be funny if we choose the same song?

P: Do we really have a particular song for each other?

M: Just like in the wedding *na* "You and I will travel far together..."? I don't even remember our wedding vow.

P: I don't believe that you don't remember our wedding vow!

M: I broke it, remember?

So what will you two be singing in the show?

P: During the height of "Penthouse Live," we used to sing a different song every week and the viewers kept waiting for it. We sang every possible love song duet. Those were the days when everybody was so *kilig*. The entire show will be like a movie, telling our love story through music.

M: We will do songs that we did in the '80s, complete with production numbers. The songs will be mostly about us. I can focus on my ballads and Pops can do her dancing-singing a la Janet Jackson or Madonna. She's better than a lot of performers when it comes to that. We hope the people who watched us before will watch us again now. The tragic thing is we're no longer a couple in real life.

Your pictorial for this concert has the two of you in very romantic poses. Was it hard to do it when you've been separated for five years?

M: The only thing hard about it is waking up at 10 in the morning. But that was the same pose we did for our last concert seven years ago, only the clothes are different. It was the famous pose we simply re-enacted and it was easy for us to do.

Do you still keep pictures of you together?

P: I'm in that stage now where my *galit* with Martin no longer lasts that long. His photos at home, especially the ones with the kids, are back.

M: My photos are in her house, and it says, "Wanted: Dead or Alive." Pops still has a picture in my bedroom. Only recently, I removed her photo from my wallet. You'll surely never believe that.

Do you still get jealous when you hear talk about each other's romances?

M: I don't want to hear what she likes or who her type is? That's a private thing for her and I no longer have the rights in that department.

It will be wrong for me to ask her factually who she's seeing now. We don't have a hold on each other.

Pain turns you into a stronger, more confident person and I think that's attractive. The only strain we have as a couple now is spending time with our kids.

Is your love for each other still there?

M: My love for Pops will always be unconditional. I don't expect anything back. I don't do things now to impress her like I used to, or try to win her back. It's never to show off anything. It's true love that comes from the heart. Whatever I was to Pops minus the intimacy, I still am. I'm still there for her. I still support her. I'm still rooting for her. I get hurt when I read bad things about her which are always wrong. I'm there to defend her till the bitter end. I'm the guy whom she doesn't have to worry about because I'm not trying to get anything back. We have our separate lives to live now, but I realized that is really my calling in life, to be there for Pops.

Leah Salterio

HE SAID, SHE SAID. "We have a special love in our friendship."

Melanie's half sister defends Temyong's widow

DOLLY WOOD

Dolly Ann Carvajal

"THE BUZZ," "S-Files" and "Startalk" picked up my story regarding Tita **Marivic Marquez**, widow of director **Artemio Marquez**, and her lamentations toward her stepdaughter **Melanie Marquez**.

When I came out with the exposé, it was not my intention to aggravate the already strained relationship of Tita Marivic and Melanie. In fact, I didn't take a combative stance. Instead, I wrote from the vantage point of a stepdaughter since I know what it's like.

To this day, I maintain a friendly relationship with my stepdad **Bo**. And I don't consider **Clara** as my half-sister. It's my mom's love for us that makes us one pure blood.

Love far outweighs genetic makeup. I never thought that my column would trigger an all-out word war between Tita Marivic and Melanie.

I tried to get Melanie's side but she opted to air her sentiments on TV instead. I repeatedly tried to contact her through our common friend **Mercy Lejarde**, but my efforts were all in vain.

As a writer, I must be objective but there will always be objections from various camps and I've learned to live with that. I'm merely an instrument that's why I find it a bit odd when some stars react so vehemently to what I write about them when I'm just quoting someone's accusations against them. They just supply me with the bullets and I simply serve as the launch pad. I cannot fight their battles for them. If at all, I try to pacify both parties with my own personal comments about a certain issue.

Looks like the word war ain't over yet because Melanie's stepsister **Anna Victoria** who's based in California (daughter of Tita Marivic and the late Direk Temyong) e-mailed me her grievances which I'd also like to print in this column.

The plot thickens, but I do hope that after all is said and done, the Marquez family will realize that blood is indeed thicker than water.

How sad if they let the water run dry and their blood boil with their endless bickering.

Here's Anna Victoria's side of the story:

"We are saddened by the events that has rocked our private lives these past few days. Melanie, in her quest for publicity, insulted and deliberately told lies about our family. In her drama, she is the victim, the leading character, and we are the antagonist and oppressors. The problem is we never really wanted to be included in her drama, thus our mom's decision to come out and air our side.

"We want to correct Melanie in her statements.

"She never gave anything for our education. We owe all of that to our mom and her clan. We never asked for financial help from our half brothers and sisters. They can attest to that.

"My mom doesn't need any money nor any publicity. She paid for all of my dad's hospital bills and funeral arrangements and she has money left to spend in her lifetime. She has nothing to gain in all of this because she has retired from show business.

"She was long separated from her first husband before she went out with daddy, thus a seven-year gap between my older half brother and me.

"My other siblings on my mother's side did not oblige daddy to help them financially. They have their own money and did not have to depend on daddy for support. It was, in fact, the sister of their father upon the request of my mom, who recommended Melanie as a model for **Bobby Novenario**.

"We support our mother in her pursuit to expose the truth. Melanie gave out obvious clues as to who her oppressor is. My mother is not guilty of Melanie's accusations. She is simply putting a stop to Melanie's 'victim effect' publicity.

"Character is molded by how we respect our elders and our dead. We try to do what is right and just.

"We love our daddy despite his shortcomings and imperfection. We do not wish to destroy the lives of his other children. In his memory, we would try to respect, not pretend to love, what is left of him, our brothers and sisters. We are hoping that they will do the same."

Personal

MUCHISIMAS gracias to my lovable "classmate" **Deo Endrinal** for helping me invite his multi-talented ward **Carlos Agassi** for New World Hotel's party at such short notice.

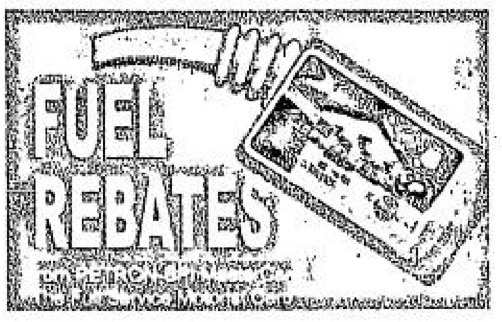
Carlos wowed the crowd. He was at optimum performance level even if he was nursing a fever. Kudos to you Carlos.

Mille grazie to my good friend **Kim Atienza** for his ever-ready helping hand. Thanks, too, to his gracious staff.

Kim is enjoying fatherhood to the hilt. His four-month old son is his carbon copy. I'm sure the boy will grow up to be as wonderful as his dad.

Birthday hugs and kisses to my friend for all seasons and reasons, **Emma San Juan**. Love you like the elder sister I've always wanted to have.

For feedback e-mail friends_at_dsquare@yahoo.com or jaimealsan@yahoo.com



TUESDAY,
FEBRUARY 4, 2003

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

E-mail: pr_business@inquirer.com.ph

BUSINESS

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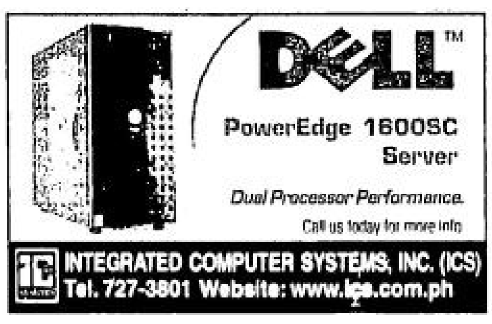
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Treasury bill rates rise, peso weakens

INDICATORS

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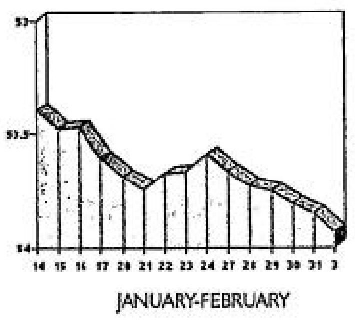


GRAPHS BY LUI VILLARICO

PESO-DOLLAR RATE

P P53.935 $ 1

As of 5 p.m., Feb. 3, 2003

¥ 120.48 = $ 1

As of 5 p.m., Feb. 3, 2003

GOLD: $365.90-366.40

per ounce Hong Kong, Jan. 30, 2003

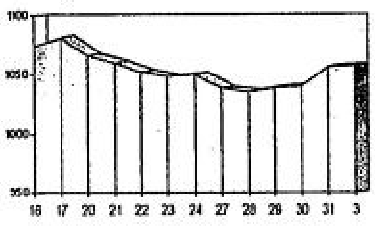
STOCK MARKET

Stocks edge up

STOCKS edged slightly higher yesterday but with fears about the impact of a likely war in Iraq keeping most investors sidelined, traders said.

Value turnover was just P97.6 million against P178.67 million last Friday, reflecting investor fears about taking positions while the threat of war hangs in the background.

PSE COMPOSITE INDEX
JANUARY- FEBRUARY



(See stock market report on Page B2)

STOCKS/ B2

By Clarissa S. Batino

TREASURY bill yields went up as the peso continued to weaken following concerns about the brewing Middle East conflict, expectations of a higher budget deficit, and a possible increase in the central bank's overnight rates.

The Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas said it expected the peso to weaken further as the United States prepares to battle Iraq, but BSP Governor Rafael Buenaventura vowed to intervene "if necessary" in the spot market to stabilize the currency.

The central bank said "geopolitical risks arising from the Middle East tension could weigh down on the peso."

The peso had been showing renewed signs of volatility in the past weeks. It closed at P53.935 yesterday from P53.848 to $1 last Friday.

At the Bureau of Treasury, the benchmark 91-day treasury bill rate rose 42.4 basis points to 5.672 percent, the 182-day went up by 32.3 basis points to 6.6 percent and the 364-day increased by 40.8 basis points to 7.609 percent.

Tenders exceeded the government's offers of P4 billion for the 91-day, P3 billion for 182-day and P2.5 billion for 364-day.

Due to the higher bids, the government accepted only P3.316 billion for the three-month, P2.065 billion for the six-month and P2.48 billion for the one-year treasuries.

"The market is affected by the IMF report on the deficit as well as the war tension. Reports that the central bank would increase overnight rates also added pressure," said Deputy Treasurer Eduardo Mendiola.

The International Monetary Fund said the budget deficit this year would likely hit P262.88 billion against the government's target of P202 billion. The BSP had indicated that it would increase overnight rates once inflation hit 5 percent. These developments encouraged the market to seek a higher return on their placements.

The deputy treasurer warned that the government would reject succeeding bids for treasury bills if rates continued to move up.

It did not help that the peso continued to act up, hitting a low of 53.95 to $1 during the morning trade, according to traders. A volatile peso usually prompts the fixed-income market to ask for higher yield on treasury bill placements.

"However, the possibility that the US-led war on Iraq ... will only be short-lived should limit the pressure on the peso," BSP Deputy Governor Amando Tetangco Jr. said during a presentation before lawmakers on the country's economic prospects.

Much of the currency's weakness stems from the increasing dollar requirements of importers like oil companies to finance unusually higher volumes of imports in preparation for the US-Iraq war.

As importers try to beef up inventory, they scramble for dollars that create a shortage in the spot market and tend to push down the peso's value. Even families of overseas workers try to delay exchanging their dollars in the hope that they will get more pesos.

Buenaventura said he believed the peso would average at between 53 and 53.50 to $1 this year, well within the government's forecast of 52 to 54 to a dollar. Financial markets, however, expect the peso to slide to between 55 and 60 against the greenback within the year.

The BSP chief said a P60:$1 exchange rate was not on his "radar screen." Still, Buenaventura admitted that the peso might remain weak in the first half in reaction to rising crude oil prices.

In 2002, the local currency averaged at P51.587 and closed the year at P53.254 to $1.

"Compared to its level as of Jan. 2, 2002, the exchange rate as of end-December depreciated by 2.7 percent while most US currencies appreciated during the period," Tetangco admitted.

The Thai baht improved 2.8 percent, the Indonesian rupiah by 16.5 percent, the Singapore dollar by 6.3 percent, the Taiwan dollar by one percent, and the Japanese yen by 9.7 percent.

Tetangco pointed out, however, that the local currency was less volatile last year compared to 2001.

TREASURY/ B2

Solid Group closes Laguna factory

By Doris C. Dumlao

CONSUMER electronics manufacturer Solid Group Inc. has shut down the operations of another wholly owned subsidiary, Solid Laguna Corp., starting last month due to the slump in production orders from principal Japanese customers Sony and JVC.

Sony and JVC Philippines chose to import completely build-up (CBU) products following the lowering of tariffs under the Asean Free Trade Agreement (Afta) rather than outsource production from Solid Laguna, company spokesperson Enrique Ligeralde told the Philippine Stock Exchange yesterday.

"The cessation of operations will reduce SGI's revenue for year 2002 by approximately P120 million," Ligeralde said.

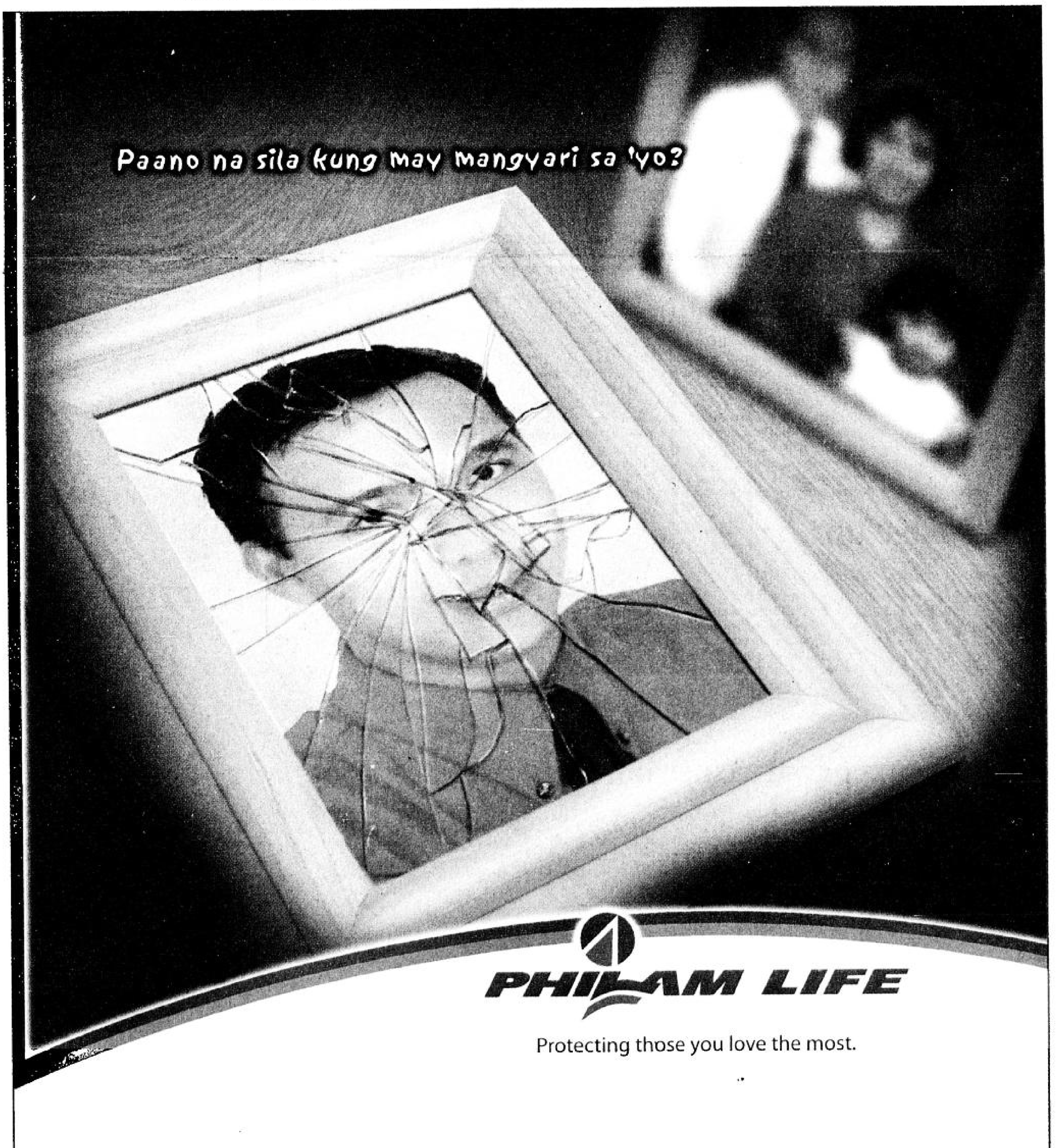
"The company will, however, maintain certain technical services as well as its plastics division, which is engaged in plastic molding, primarily the manufacture of high quality plastic casing and component," he explained.

Solid Laguna, which is located at the Laguna International Industrial Park, was not the first SGI subsidiary that was affected by the slump in production orders.

In early 2001, SGI shut down subsidiary Kita Corp. due to the pullout of principal customer Aiwa Co. Ltd., which is likewise owned by Sony Corp. of Japan, while another unit, Clark Plastics Manufacturing Corp., which manufactures and supplies components to Kita, mothballed its packaging materials division.

"Solid Laguna will study its business op-

SOLID/ B2



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Juan big fight

BREAKTIME

Conrado R. Banal III

DROP it this very instant, whatever it is, if you are doing nothing, maybe because you work for the government, or you are one of the 11 million jobless.

This is a matter of life and death, needing your immediate attention. And the issue is, well, you can no longer go out of the house, if you're a man, without a shirt on.

That, according to serious real-life reports, is the new rule of BF.

That's the Metro Manila Development Authority chair, who is also public works and highways secretary, not to mention the former mayor of Marikina.

Moreover, he is the husband of the current mayor, whose father is a business leader (the current mayor's).

In turn, the father has a son who cornered a big fat contract with a government agency, and whose father-in-law (the current mayor's, meaning, the father of the ex-mayor) also used to be the mayor. Get it?

The most pressing matter is, nevertheless, what will BF think of next? If you are a woman, maybe he will not allow you to go out without make-up on.

Time will come when you cannot go out in public without both on, shirt and make-up, if you're something else.

* * *

BELIEVE me, anyway, many business groups are in love with BF. "Political will," is the phrase you are most likely to hear, when they talk of the way BF rules Metro Manila.

In business, of course, they have been dying for our government to exercise even just a tiny weenie bit of political will.

But of course the term "political will" has nothing to do with inheritance, such as elective positions in local government units like the mayoralty of Marikina, Pasig, Makati, etc., where husbands simply bequeathed the mayoralty to their wives.

That's a different kind of will, involving a lot of money and property, which should but does not usually start with "being of sound mind, I just spent it all."

Political will is the business sector's lifetime wish. They need the government to do a lot of things for them. The government cannot do them because the government lacks ... well, political will.

That's why, word is going around that an ex-military guy is preparing for 2004—but not for the next Olympics.

* * *

MAKE no mistake, Bistek, it's the next national elections. In fact, in all business meetings, part of the agenda is who's running for what in 2004.

That's the way the high-income group protects their interest. This, in fact, is the biggest problem in our economy. I am no longer kidding.

That a small group of people can corner the policy decision of the government, is even stated in the economic paper of Economic Planning Secretary Romulo Neri.

He actually presented it to this cute administration of Gloriaetta, meaning, the President herself, the entire Cabinet, and their allies in Congress.

My sources could not tell if Neri's audience winced, or even just felt uneasy, when he talked about the vested interest of the ruling class.

Neri simply stated that, for a long, long time, government policies have favored the high income groups.

That's why each sector wants its own candidate for President, or at least senator, such as the different churches, the movie stars, and Couples for Christ.

* * *

NOW the ex-military guy, from what I hear, is getting the support from certain business groups. Of course, given the chance, he will protect the interest of the military.

But since business groups are pushing for him, he will have to protect the interest of big business, that's for sure.

Many in business believe that, in this part of the world, the military has a big role to play in national development.

They are saying, for instance, that it was not an accident that the son of Singapore's longtime leader Lee Kwan Yew was a general in the Singapore Army, and his nickname even recognizes that fact. Known as BG Lee, as in "brigadier general," the guy is also known to be a close friend to many in big business.

So what about us, Fabregas, who will protect our interest? I mean, we cannot just rely on movie stars, because it just does not work. Go ahead, ask the people of Parañaque.

My dream has always been for us to find a leader who comes from the poor—meaning, one of us—because in that case, we can be certain where his heart belongs.

At the same time, however, the leader must be well educated. In that way, he will be acceptable to the ruling class. Maybe they will not boot him out just like that.

I have in mind such a man, and it is not Sen. Vicente Sotto III, who, from what I heard, is running for mayor of Quezon City, after being voted as best political comedian.

I am talking about the small Sen. Juan Flavier, who to my mind is the most credible guy in the horizon today.

I understand that he can be convinced to run in 2004. If he does run, given the plan of that ex-military guy, I can almost see it as Juan's biggest fight of a lifetime.

* * *

HOW do you explain politics in this country? Celebrities easily make it to the Senate. Advance to be recognized, Loren, Noli, Tito (without Vic and Joey), Kiko, Jawo, Nardong Putik, and Mr. Vil ... Ralph.

But men like the ex-governor of Bulacan, Agrarian Reform Secretary Roberto Pagdanganan, cannot make it after so many tries, and he is a good man.

Today Obet is in the Cabinet, but that's for a good reason. Under this cute administration of Gloriaetta, we are trying to turn farmers into businessmen.

For the past several decades, our agrarian reform program was all about giving out land to the farmers. That is good. Farmers need land as much as reporters need beer.

But the program should never stop at land distribution. What can happen is, if the farmers cannot make enough money, they simply sell the land at bargain prices. This is sad but it is true.

A lot of the land given away under the program is now owned by people with short names. Sue me but it's true.

* * *

ANYWAY, Obet seems to have a mission from Gloriaetta. Not known to many is his track record in cooperativism. It is, his friends say, a passion of the man.

As an executive of the giant conglomerate PRC Unilever, which is said to be the marketing "university" in this country, Obet was able to visit many Asian countries.

There he discovered the wonders of cooperatives. For instance, South Korea, Malaysia, and Thailand reached economic maturity due to the cooperative movement.

When he became the governor of Bulacan in 1986, the province had only 52 co-ops. In about 10 years, he brought that up to almost a thousand.

For example, my *kumadre* Meloy Lazaro sits in the board of a Bocaue-based savings loan co-op which is bigger than a lot of banks.

In Obet's time, the assets of co-ops in the province grew to almost P3 billion, from almost zero.

If only he can perform the same magic with farmers' co-ops, maybe we will see this economy fly. But still you must always put something on when you go out.

PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of Monday, February 3, 2003)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
BANKS & FINANCIAL SERVICES					
BANKS					
Banco de Oro Univ. Bank	17.75	17.75	17.75	17.75	5,000
Bank of the Phil. Islands	36	36.5	36	36	128,000
China Banking Corp.	635	635	635	635	4,420
Citystate Savings Bank	14.75	14.75	14.75	14.75	2,000
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	26.5	26.5	26.5	26.5	11,000
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	31	31	30.5	30.5	21,000
Security Bank Corp.	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	200
Union Bank of the Phil.	18	18	17.75	17.75	10,800
FINANCIAL SERVICES					
Filipino Fund Inc.	0.32	0.32	0.32	0.32	90,000
Manulife Financial Corp.	1215	1215	1210	1210	3,110
Sun Life Financial Serv.	955	955	955	955	580
COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL					
COMMUNICATION					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	13.25	13.5	13.25	13.5	16,500
Globe Telecom Inc.	530	550	530	545	7,540
Ipeople Inc.	0.7	0.7	0.7	0.7	10,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	297.5	300	297.5	297.5	14,630
Philweb Corp.	0.01	0.011	0.01	0.011	10,700,000
POWER & ENERGY					
Manila Electric Co. A	9.1	9.1	9	9	179,000
Manila Electric Co. B	13	13	12.75	12.75	1,154,000
Petron Corp.	1.72	1.72	1.68	1.68	2,740,000
Trans-Asia Oil and Energy	0.98	1	0.98	1	100,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Asian Terminals Inc.	1.56	1.56	1.56	1.56	40,000
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	2.4	2.4	2.4	2.4	51,000
Negros Navigation Co. Inc.	0.36	0.36	0.36	0.36	300,000
FOOD, BEVERAGES & TOBACCO					
Alaska Milk Corp.	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.2	63,000
Jollibee Foods Corp.	16.75	16.75	16.75	16.75	1,000
La Tondeña Distillers Inc.	34	34	34	34	300
Swift Food Inc.	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.8	50,000
San Miguel Corp. A	56.5	56.5	56.5	56.5	109,700
San Miguel Corp. B	65	65	64	64	310,600
Vitarich Corp.	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	100,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Abacus Con Res & Hdg B	0.33	0.33	0.33	0.33	10,000
Ayala Corp.	4.4	4.4	4.4	4.4	580,000
A. Soriano Corp..	0.56	0.56	0.56	0.56	40,000
ATN Holdings Inc.	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.2	5,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	0.15	0.16	0.15	0.16	610,000
A Brown Company Inc.	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.6	20,000
First Phil Hldgs Corp.	9.3	9.4	9.3	9.3	89,000
J.G. Summit Holdings Inc.	1.32	1.32	1.32	1.32	24,000
Marsteel Cons. Inc. A	0.009	0.009	0.009	0.009	8,000,000
Megaworld Corp.	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.6	10,000
Mabuhay Holdings Corp.	0.09	0.1	0.08	0.08	500,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	0.155	0.16	0.155	0.16	70,000
Philtread Holdings Corp.	3.1	3.1	3.1	3.1	125,000
East Asia Power Res. Corp.	0.032	0.032	0.032	0.032	200,000
Waterfront Phils. Inc.	0.31	0.31	0.31	0.31	490,000
MANUFACTURING, DISTRIBUTION & TRADING					
Metro Alliance Holdings	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.6	20,000
Metro Alliance Hldgs B	0.45	0.55	0.45	0.55	90,000
Matsushita Elec Phil Corp.	6.8	6.8	6.8	6.8	1,000
Mabuhay Vinyl Corp.	0.64	0.64	0.64	0.64	100,000
SPI Technologies Inc.	12.5	12.5	12.5	12.5	11,200
BONDS, PREFERRED & WARRANTS					
ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp. (Pdr)	13.25	13.5	13.25	13.5	458,400
Jollibee Warrants	16.5	16.5	16.5	16.5	6,000
PLDT (10% Pref) Series P	10	10	10	10	700
PLDT (10% Pref) Series Z	10	10	10	10	1,000
PLDT 10% Pref Series Aa	10	10	10	10	2,000
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	5	5	4.95	4.95	1,217,000
C & P Homes Inc.	0.145	0.145	0.14	0.14	400,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.125	0.125	0.125	0.125	10,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	0.99	1.02	0.99	1	7,260,000
Highlands Prime Inc.	1.98	1.98	1.98	1.98	100,000
SM Development Corp.	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1	37,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	5.2	5.3	5.2	5.3	509,000
MINING					
Abra Mining & Industrial	0.0034	0.0034	0.0034	0.0034	75,000,000
Lepanto Cons Mng. Co. A	0.215	0.215	0.21	0.21	700,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co. B	0.22	0.22	0.22	0.22	1,410,000
Philex Mining Corp. A	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	160,000

DISCLOSURES

MABUHAY Vinyl Corp. announced the resignation of directors Akihisa Nishina and Michael Leo Luna. Elected to replace them were Tomoyuki Koike and Kenneth Gatchalian. Wilfredo Hamoy Jr. was appointed compliance and reporting officer under the company's anti-money laundering manual.

* * *

VICTORIAS Milling Co. Inc. disclosed the resignation of Edmundo Barcelon as director of the company. Aristotle Villaraza was appointed chair of the executive committee while Juliana Gamilla was appointed chair of the audit committee. Also, Nilo Florcruz was appointed assistant corporate secretary.

* * *

ALSONS Consolidated Resources Inc. announced that its new stock transfer agent is Prime Stock Transfer Services Inc. ***Compiled by Maricar D. Tolosa, PDI Research***

Robinsons Land earmarks ₱3B for new malls

By Elena R. Torrijos

ROBINSONS Land Corp., the property arm of the Gokongwei family, is allocating P3 billion in its fiscal year ending this September to finance the construction of six malls nationwide.

RLC senior vice president Frederick Go said the property firm would be building malls in Lipa, Batangas; Cainta, Rizal; Dasmariñas, Cavite.

It would also redevelop its existing commercial complex along Edsa corner Pioneer Street. The first phase of the re-development of the Pioneer property would cover the construction of a full-fledged mall and one residential condominium.

Construction of two other malls in undisclosed areas would begin this fiscal year, he added.

The funds for the capital expenditures will come from RLC's issuance of P2 billion worth of long-term commercial papers, pre-selling and internally generated revenue such as rental income, he added.

The P2 billion in LTCPs will be issued this month. Philippine Rating Services Corp. has assigned a rating of PRS Aa to the bonds.

Go also disclosed that RLC's plan to jointly develop with Fort Bonifacio Development Corp. a 6-hectare property at the Global City had been junked.

The project was supposed to cost as much as P10 billion over the next several years and would include a mall, residential buildings and a hotel. FBDC was to have provided the land while RLC would develop the property.

RLC's commercial centers are the company's main revenue driver, accounting for about 60 percent of real estate revenue in 2001.

Revenue from its newly opened and planned malls are expected to boost earnings in the coming years, Philratings noted.

Stocks edge up

From page B1

"Iraq is part of the reason. People are just not ready to come back strongly into the market at this point because although prices are cheap, they are afraid they might still go lower," said Joey Roxas, President of Eagle Equities Inc.

The main index closed up 1.45 points, or 0.14 percent, at 1,058.14 points.

Light buying in some selected blue chips, still regarded as oversold at current levels, helped keep the index in positive territory.

Globe Telecom, the country's second biggest phone firm, continued its upward run following the release of its 2002 earnings last week that easily outstripped analysts' expectations.

The stock gained P15 to P545 and has put on nearly 8 percent since the results came out last Wednesday.

Rival telecom firm Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. (PLDT) put on P2.50 to P297.50.

The company's key cellular unit Smart Communications was also expected to have had a strong fourth quarter last year, driving 2002 earnings. The firm is expected to release its 2002 results later this month.

"PLDT we believe is still a bargain at this point and Globe and Smart tend to mirror each other," Roxas said.

Manila Electric Co's B-shares, a recent favorite of bargain hunters, ended flat at P12.75 after being up for most of the session. *Reuters*

BSP says amendments to boost fight vs dirty money

THE AMENDMENTS being considered by Congress would allow the Anti-Money Laundering Council to look into deposit or investment accounts with suspicious transactions regardless of amount, without any court order, Bangko Sentral Governor and AMLC chair Rafael B. Buenaventura said yesterday.

He said this would give additional teeth to the AMLC in leading the country's campaign against money laundering.

He added that the BSP, in the process of its examination of banks and covered financial institutions and without any court order, should also be allowed to look into accounts for the sole purpose of ensuring and monitoring compliance with the provisions of the Anti-Money Laundering Act.

Combined, these amendments would strengthen Philippine laws against money laundering, Buenaventura emphasized. He added that these amendments constituted a modification, not a repeal, of the bank secrecy laws of the Philippines.

He said the Financial Action Task Force (FATF), the international organization of countries working against money laundering activities, has accepted that there was no need for an absolute repeal of the country's bank secrecy laws. In its place, FATF is proposing modifications to the bank secrecy laws to ensure that AMLC becomes successful in preventing the laundering of dirty money and in prosecuting money launderers.

GOLFERS
CLUB SHARES, INC.
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	SELLING	BUYING
1. ALABANG COUNTRY CLUB "A"	1,400,000	1,300,000
2. ALABANG COUNTRY CLUB "B"	1,500,000	1,350,000
3. BAGUIO COUNTRY CLUB	650,000	600,000
4. CALATAGAN GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB "A"	60,000	
5. CAMP JOHN HAY	280,000	220,000
6. CANLUBANG GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB	500,000	
7. CAPITOL HILLS GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB	120,000	100,000
8. CELEBRITY CLUB	180,000	170,000
9. COUNTRY CLUB AT TAGAYTAY HIGHLANDS	350,000	340,000
10. CLUB FILIPINO	190,000	140,000
11. EASTRIDGE GOLF CLUB "A"	130,000	
12. EAGLERIDGE GOLF CLUB "A"	300,000	250,000
13. EVERCREST GOLF CLUB "A"	100,000	
14. FOREST HILLS GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB "A"	200,000	
15. FOREST HILLS GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB "B"	250,000	
16. FOREST HILLS GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB "C"	350,000	
17. LUISITA GOLF CLUB	350,000	
18. MAKATI SPORTS CLUB "A"	250,000	230,000
19. MAKATI SPORTS CLUB "B"	270,000	250,000
20. MANILA GOLF CLUB (IND.)	11,000,000	10,500,000
21. MANILA GOLF CLUB (CORP.)	13,000,000	
22. MANILA POLO CLUB	2,600,000	2,400,000
23. MANILA SOUTHWOODS GOLF CLUB "A"	500,000	475,000
24. MANILA SOUTHWOODS GOLF CLUB "B"		550,000
25. METROPOLITAN CLUB "A"	100,000	
26. METROPOLITAN CLUB "B"	150,000	100,000
27. MT MALARAYAT GOLF CLUB (IND.)	350,000	
28. ORCHARD GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB "A" "B" "C"	Pls call	Pls call
29. QUEZON CITY SPORTS CLUB	220,000	200,000
30. RIVIERA GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB "A"	180,000	150,000
31. RIVIERA GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB "B"	210,000	
32. RIVIERA GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB "C"	300,000	300,000
33. STA. ELENA GOLF CLUB "A"	1,500,000	1,300,000
34. BUBIC BAY YACHT CLUB (IND.)	200,000	
35. TAGAYTAY HIGHLANDS INT'L GOLF CLUB	850,000	800,000
36. TAGAYTAY MIDLAND	750,000	700,000
37. VALLE VERDE COUNTRY CLUB	160,000	140,000
38. VALLEY GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB	280,000	
39. WACK WACK GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB	6,200,000	

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Treasury bill rates rise . . .

From page B1

Tetangco stressed that despite the pressures that may push down the local currency temporarily, the projected growth in exports should help bring in more dollars and strengthen the peso's value.

The government said exports should grow by between 5 and 8 percent this year from a similar growth in 2002 and against a 15.7 percent contraction in 2001.

"The projected growth in exports is expected to have a positive impact on the peso. Efforts to press ahead with structural reforms are also expected to create fresh incentives to attract foreign exchange inflows and support the peso," the BSP deputy governor noted.

"Moreover, fiscal authorities' commitment to pursue vigorously measures to improve tax administration, enhance revenue collections and maintain prudence in government spending would help the peso," he added.

Solid Group closes Laguna factory

From page B1

tions to maximize the use of its Laguna facilities, including disposal of certain inventories and equipment that are no longer required for any future operation," Ligeralde said.

"The concerns of all employees and staff who may be affected by the closure are being addressed by management in accordance with the law and existing company policies," he said.

SGI has a joint venture with Sony Corp. on the marketing and distribution of Sony products sold in the Philippines. Sony owns 67 percent of the joint venture while Solid owns the balance.

Analysts said SGI has suffered from a slowdown in demand in the local market due to the influx of cheap electronic products from South Korea and mainland China, forcing the company to streamline operations since 1998.

Aside from electronics manufacturing, Solid Group has interests in real estate and Internet businesses.

Recently, SGI revived plans to merge with the Destiny multimedia group as part of its venture into the Internet business. Destiny Inc. and Destiny Cable Inc., owned by the family of Joseph and Elena Lim, likewise control SGI.

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SELLING
Alabang A/B 1.45/1.6M
Canyon Woods Please call
Capitol Hills 105 000
Forest Hill A/B/C 200/220/240
Manila Polo 2.5M
Punta Fuego Share/Lot Please call
Sherwood A/B/C 70/120/150
Subic Yacht (Indv./Corp 120-240
Tagaytay Highland Golf Club 210-340
Tagaytay Highland Spa & Lodge 500 000
Valley Golf 300 000
Wack Wack Please call

BUYING
Alabang A/B 1.35M
Camp John Hay Golf 225 000
Celebrity 175 000
Manila Golf (Indv./Corp.) 10.5M/10.5M
Manila Polo 2.5M
Manila Southwoods A/B 500-550
Mimosa Indv/Corp Please call
Mt. Malarayat A/B/C Please call
Punta Fuego Share/Lot Please call
Sherwood A/B 70-150
Valle Verde CC 150 000
Wack Wack 6.1M

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CURRENCIES

Feb. 3, 2003 Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Foreign currency in US$	Foreign currency in Peso
United States	Dollar	0.928505	1.000000	53.837000
Japan	Yen	0.007747	0.008343	0.449200
United Kingdom	Pound	1.530919	1.648800	88.766400
Hongkong	Dollar	0.119044	0.128210	6.902400
Switzerland	Franc	0.680822	0.733245	39.475700
Canada	Dollar	0.610818	0.657851	35.416700
Singapore	Dollar	0.534945	0.576136	31.017400
Australia	Dollar	0.544770	0.586717	31.587100
Bahrain	Dinar*	2.463009	2.652661	142.811300
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.247608	0.266674	14.356900
Brunei	Dollar	0.533409	0.574482	30.928400
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000105	0.000113	0.006100
Thailand	Baht	0.021704	0.023375	1.258400
UAE	Dirham	0.252820	0.272287	14.659100
Euro	Euro	1.000000	1.077000	57.982400
ArgentinaPeso	0.291068	0.313480	16.876800	
Brazil	REAL	0.263480	0.283768	15.277200
Denmark	Kroner	0.134517	0.144875	7.799600
India	Rupee	0.019453	0.020951	1.127900
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.244376	0.263193	14.169500
Mexico	New Peso	0.085161	0.091718	4.937800
New Zealand	Dollar	0.505860	0.544811	29.331000
Norway	Kroner	0.134146	0.144475	7.778100
Pakistan	Rupee	0.015968	0.017197	0.925800
South Africa	Rand	0.108980	0.117371	6.318900
Korea	Won	0.000799	0.000860	0.046300
Sweden	Kroner	0.108230	0.116564	6.275500
Syria	Pound	0.018029	0.019417	1.045400
Taiwan	Nt Dollar	0.026905	0.028977	1.560000
Venezuela	Bolivar	0.000484	0.000521	0.028000

HK firm acquires Pavilion Hotel owner

By Doris C. Dumlao

HONG Kong-based holding firm Sino-i.com Ltd. has finalized its takeover of a controlling stake in hotelier Acesite (Phils.) Hotel Corp., owner of the Manila Pavilion Hotel, for P1.48 billion.

In a disclosure to the Philippine Stock Exchange yesterday, Acesite Phils. executive vice president Francis Lam said Sino-i.com completed last Jan. 30 a deal to purchase 100 percent of South Port Development Ltd., a British Virgin Islands-registered firm which has experience in running leisure facilities in mainland China and Australia.

South Port owns 100 percent of British Virgin Islands-based Acesite Ltd., which in turn owns 75 percent of Acesite Phils.

The sellers—Fu Liang, Tom Li, Chen Peng Jing and Vincent Chiu—unloaded 74.88 million shares of Acesite Phils. in favor of Sino-i.com at P19.79 per share, representing a premium of 214.13 percent over the last traded price of P6.30.

The 74.88 million shares in Acesite Phils. have earlier been pledged by Acesite Ltd. to local lender Equitable PCI Bank to secure certain debt obligations.

Lam said Sino-i.com would liquidate the loans with Equitable PCI but until the liquidation shall have been completed, the bank would have the right to foreclose on the shares.

Sino-i.com is also expected to negotiate for the restructuring of a $15-million loan with the Industrial and Commercial Bank of China to "ensure the stability and financial liquidity" of Acesite Phils., Lam said.

Despite the closing of the takeover deal, Lam said no major changes were expected with respect to the hotel operations of Acesite Phils. and the Manila Pavilion.

Holiday Inn Hotels and Resorts recently pulled out of a management contract with the Manila Pavilion due to dissatisfaction with the building's physical infrastructure.

"Sino-i.com has indicated that it shall continue with the proposed renovation program for the hotel including improvements in safety and security facilities, upgrading of machinery and equipments and refurbishment of facilities," Lam said.

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Postal firm plans ₱5-B bond float

By Elena R. Torrijos

STATE-OWNED Philippine Postal Corp. plans to issue P5 billion worth of bonds this year to raise funds to finance its modernization program and pare down debt.

Postmaster General Diomedio Villanueva said in a telephone interview yesterday that the state agency was in the process of selecting a financial adviser and lead underwriter for the bond issue.

Eight to nine financial institutions have submitted proposals to handle the bond issue, he said. The chosen financial group will recommend to PPC the ideal structure and terms of the planned borrowing.

Other steps that the PPC has to undertake for the bond issue include getting a sovereign guarantee for the bonds and securing approval of the Department of Finance and the Monetary Board of the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas.

"There are a lot of things that had to be done. Our target is for the bond flotation before the end of the year," Villanueva said.

PPC's board has already approved the issuance of the bonds.

Villanueva cited the need for PPC to upgrade or replace its existing equipment, which included decades old sorting machines and vehicles.

He also said that it was necessary for the postal firm to be automated and computerized.

Part of the P5 billion would also be used to refinance debt, he added.

Based on its financial statements audited by the Commission on Audit, PPC had incurred a net loss of P46 million and had a net worth of P3.718 billion in the year 2000.

Villanueva said that his predecessor was able to put the state-agency in the black since then.

The PPC came into existence with the passage of the Postal Service Act of 1992. It is an attached agency of the Department of Transportation and Communications. It operates the country's nationwide postal system.

Pre-need firms OK code of ethics

By Michelle V. Remo

THE PHILIPPINE Federation of Pre-need Plan Companies Inc. will be forming a Committe on Ethics that will hear and decide on cases of violations of the federation's Code of Practice and Ethics.

This was disclosed yesterday by the federation's president, Miguel Vazquez, during a presentation of the federation's Code of Practice and Ethics before Securities and Exchange Commission Chair Lilia Bautista.

The Code of Practice and Ethics was established for the pre-need industry "to live up to the demands of the social, economic and moral responsibilities of the industry to planholders."

Included in the industry's Code of Practice and Ethics are provisions that seek to ensure the delivery of services to planholders whose standards are in accordance with what is stipulated in the pre-need plan contracts.

A provision in the Code also requires members of the pre-need industry to develop service packages "in conformity with with generally accepted standards of public decency and good taste."

The Code of Practice and Ethics also requires members to make advertisements of pre-need plans clear and explicitly stated in order not to mislead the public in terms of the services' price, terms of payment, features and benefits.

Another provision of the pre-need industry's Code of Practice and Ethics calls for the respect of members for one another by not "disparaging the name and work of its competitors, whether directly or indirectly, or by circulation of harmful rumors about them."

Any member found violating any of the provisions of the code would be given a sanction depending on the gravity of the offense. Sanctions range from a simple written reprimand, temporary membership suspension, to termination of membership.

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NAIA TERMINAL 3 CONTROVERSY

Chengs selling out; Fraport says price too high

By Abigail L. Ho

FACED with more controversies and mounting losses, the majority owner of Philippine International Air Terminals Co. Inc. is reportedly selling out of the consortium building the Ninoy Aquino International Airport Terminal 3.

In a news conference yesterday, MIA-NAIA Association of Service Operators chair Perfecto Yasay Jr. said the Chengs were selling their shares in the Piatco consortium to their German partner, Fraport AG Frankfurt Airport Services Worldwide, for $200 million.

Fraport only agreed to buy the Cheng family out of the company for $35 million, an offer that the Chengs had apparently turned down, Yasay said.

"The Chengs' share in Piatco is only $16 million, $11 million of which even came from Fraport in the form of debts. Yet they want to sell their shares for $200 million. Of course, Fraport did not agree but still offered them $35 million. (Piatco president) Cheng Yong turned this down," Yasay told reporters.

Piatco chief executive Jeffrey Cheng, however, denied there was such an offer from the Germans and that his family was selling out of the consortium.

"The allegation is completely false. It's just one of those incredible stories that Yasay is telling. There is no such deal," he told the INQUIRER.

Also, Piatco vice president for public affairs Moises Tolentino Jr. said the Cheng family had, at this point, no intention of leaving the consortium.

He added that the Chengs were not even contemplating the possibility of selling their shares in the company, even to their German partner.

"The Chengs have no intention to leave. They nurtured the project to completion. They're not about to sell their shares (now that the terminal is finished)," he said in a separate interview.

According to Yasay, NAIA 3 is far from finished as the Manila International Airport Authority has cited 42 "inadequacies" that the new terminal has and will have to correct before it can commercially open.

RP to push drug import program

DESPITE strong resistance from the United States and European Union, the Philippines will go ahead with the parallel importation of drugs this year, and it is even increasing the volume of imports to P500 million to include patented anti-cancer and anti-HIV drugs.

Trade Undersecretary Thomas Aquino said the Philippines would fully exploit the Doha declaration on trade-related aspects of intellectual property rights (Trips) agreement and public health, which allowed developing countries to issue compulsory licenses for the importation of medicine.

Aquino said the Philippines was prepared to face the consequences of its actions in the face of threats by the United States and European Union that were protecting interests of American and European pharmaceutical firms.

Aquino said the government was firm in its position that the Doha declaration should not be curtailed with too many restrictions because it would defeat its purpose of providing cheap medicine to the public.

US and European drug companies were worried that unscrupulous traders might use developing countries that issue compulsory licenses as transit point to re-export the cheap medicine to other countries. *Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.*

Power rates cut stays, ERC rules

By Ronnel W. Domingo

THE ENERGY Regulatory Commission has upheld its decisions on the unbundled rate petitions of two electric cooperatives resulting in a relief of about 20.5 centavos per kilowatt-hour for consumers in Pampanga and Sorsogon.

In separate orders for Pampanga I Electric Cooperative (Pelco I) and Sorsogon I Electric Cooperative (Soreco I) dated Jan. 29, the ERC denied the provincial utilities' motion for the quasi-judicial body to reconsider its earlier decisions penned on Nov. 18.

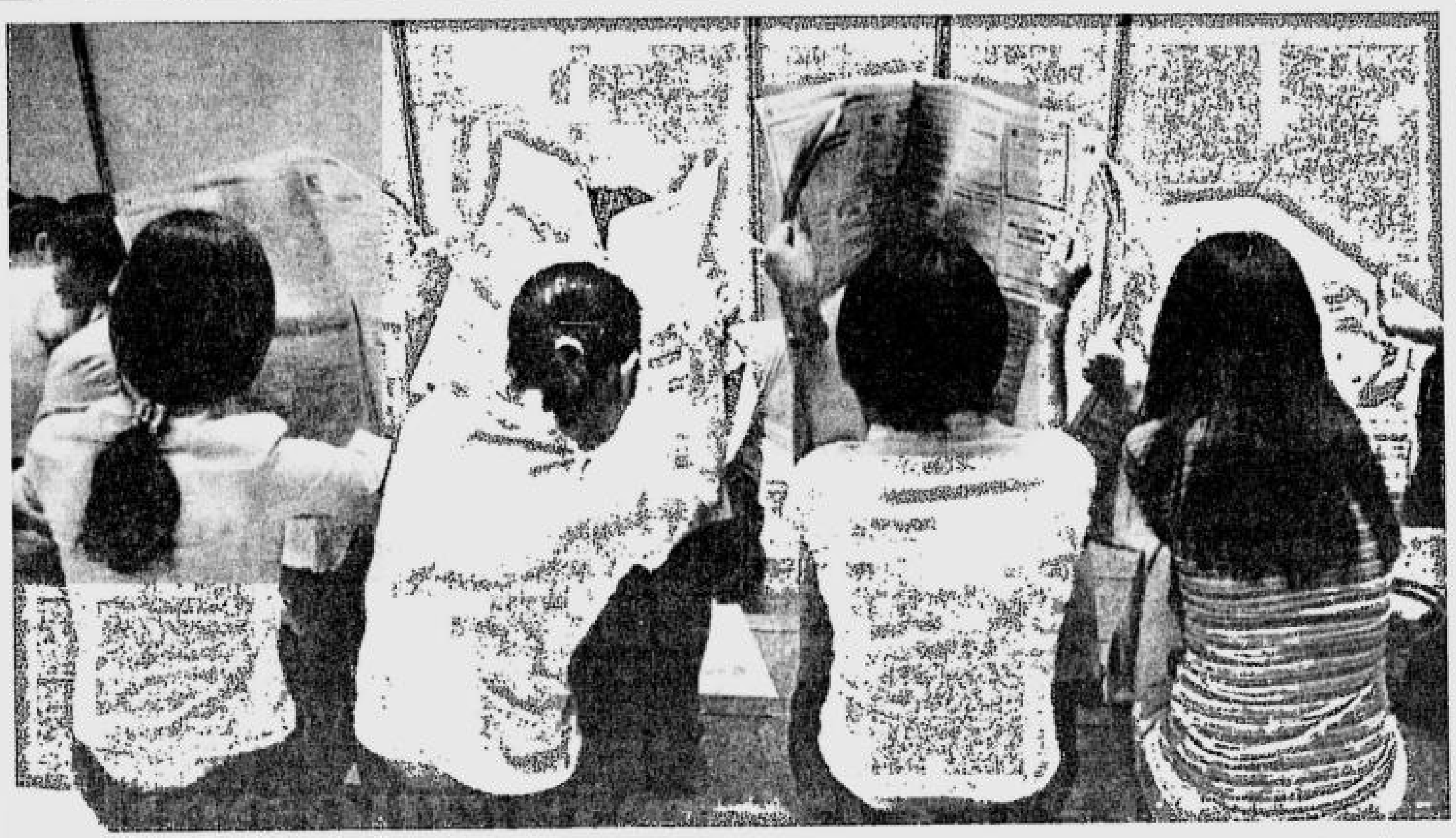
Among other things, the cooperatives asked that they be allowed to pass on to customers the costs of electricity lost in the course of their operations, which went as high as 17 percent of the power they bought from producers.

The ERC denied this, saying the law allowed only the recovery of up to 14 percent systems loss for electric cooperatives.

The agency's November decisions provided for decreased rates instead of the increases that Pelco I and Soreco I asked for.

An average residential Pelco I customer of Pelco I, who uses up 82 kwh a month, would be paying P4.531 per kwh—a cut of 20.3 centavos from the current rate of P4.734 per kwh.

Pelco I had asked for an overall rate increase of P1.44 per kwh.



JOBSEEKERS in a huddle inside a hiring center. A recent MRI Worldwide survey shows that companies in the Philippines are bound to hire more employees despite a slow domestic economy and threats of war abroad.

Local firms will hire in 2003, survey shows

DESPITE last year's economic slowdown and repercussions of the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks in the United States, companies in the Philippines are still on the lookout for talented people to fill key roles, according to a survey conducted by MRI Worldwide, the world's biggest search company.

Canvassing companies operating in most major sectors, the MRI Worldwide survey found that 79 percent of companies operating in the Philippines intended to maintain or increase their current staffing levels in the next six months.

Forty percent of the companies surveyed said they would be actively looking for more mid-to-upper level managers, high-level executives, professionals, sales and marketing people, and technical workers between now and May 2003.

Twenty-one percent said they planned to reduce staffing levels, and two in every five companies surveyed said they would maintain existing staff numbers.

"These figures certainly don't indicate a hiring boom, but they are a clear sign that the job market for the professional and managerial segment of the workforce is in healthy shape," Heriberto Santos, head of MRI Worldwide in the Philippines, said.

"Companies wanting to maintain or increase current staffing levels are on the lookout for quality candidates. There is still demand for talented and experienced people who help to give companies the competitive edge," he said.

The survey also found that smaller companies with up to 250 employees were most likely to be hiring in the next six months, while medium-size companies employing between 250 and 500 people were the most likely to cut their workforce.

Of the largest companies surveyed—companies with more than 1,000 employees—nearly three quarters (73 percent) are planning to maintain or increase current staffing levels.

"Companies have remained cautious during the past 12 months, making hiring decisions carefully and, in some cases, delaying decisions to hire new teams or set up new divisions," Santos said.

"However, this survey indicates that there will certainly be a focus on hiring in the next six months. Staff retention and replacement of departing staff will also remain a priority. More than ever, Philippine companies are making a greater effort to retain the good people they have on staff," he added.

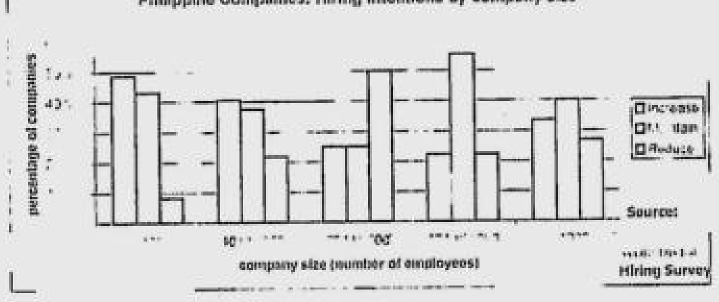
MRI Worldwide provides search and recruitment services to clients in every major industry, serving multinational companies on a global basis.

With over 220 offices in Europe and Asia alone, the MRI network now exceeds 1,100 offices worldwide, making it the largest search company in the world.

Based in Cleveland, MRI has system-wide billings of $600 million and places 45,000 people in jobs annually.

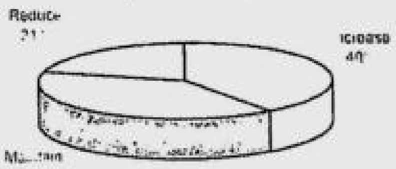
MRI is a subsidiary of staffing and outsourcing leader CDI Corp.

Philippine Companies: Hiring intentions by company size



Source: Hiring Survey

Philippine Companies: Staffing intentions (next 6 months)



Source: Hiring Survey

Mining companies staking claims near Baguio

By Vincent Cabreza
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

BAGUIO CITY—Large mining interests have found a taste for gold lying beneath this mountain resort city.

Philex Mining Corp. is transacting a mine sharing arrangement with the Philippine Military Academy and for mineral lands near the century-old Kennon Road, documents obtained by the INQUIRER showed.

According to these documents, Philex chair and chief executive Gerald Brimo offered in a letter he sent in 1991 to then Armed Forces chief Gen. Diomedio Villanueva a 1-percent royalty share from a mining operation that would be jointly managed by Philex and Anglo-American Explorations Philippines Inc.

In his letter, Brima placed the military's royalty share at P150 million a year for at least 20 years from the planned development of "the eastern periphery of Fort del Pilar, (which) covers only 13 percent of the entire military reservation."

Villanueva turned down Philex's offer, but discussions with Defense Secretary Angelo Reyes continued.

Other mining companies are reportedly looking at tapping two other mineral reservations here, citing two presidential proclamations issued in 1957 and 1959 by former President Carlos Garcia.

Proclamation 414 classified 380.5725 hectares of land outside Camp John Hay along Loakan Road as a mineral reserve, while Proclamation 572 segregated 101.5980 ha of Baguio land, including tourist spot Mines View Park, for mining.

Sources at the Mines and Geosciences Bureau said the PMA campus, Kennon Road and Baguio's two mineral reservations "form a region of mineral opportunities" drawing the attention of Philex and two other mining firms.

"(The PMA offer) is an exploration venture because, while we see the potential, we do not know what they really are until we look," a Philex official said here on Saturday.

Catalino Corpuz, coordinator of the Minewatch Asia Pacific, said, however, that the sudden interest in mineral sites around and within Baguio was a "manifestation of the Filipino mining engineers' penchant to bloat a project's potential so they can draw foreign investments."

"There's little or no high-grade mineral deposit in these areas. The (Americans cleaned us) out already when they built the mines. This is a repeat of the mine engineers') attempts to reinvigorate capital interest similar to what they have done as employees of Indonesian and Malaysian firms," Corpuz said.

Villanueva's biggest reservation about mining the PMA was the public's opinion about mining.

Group slams 40% tariff on veggies

By Michelle V. Remo

THERE will be a significant reduction in the volume of imported vegetables if the Tariff Commission pushes its plan to slap a 40-percent tariff on imported vegetables, an industry group said yesterday.

In an interview, Martin Garcia, president of the Organization of Produce Importers of the Philippines, told the INQUIRER that with fewer imports, there could be a rise in the number of vegetables being smuggled into the country.

Currently, vegetable importers are paying a 7-percent tariff.

Another vegetable importer and a member of the importers' association, who asked not to be named, said vegetable importers were being unfairly blamed for the low sales of local vegetables and their decreasing prices.

He said the real culprit were vegetables being smuggling into the country from China.

Vegetable importers cannot possibly be the reason behind the drop in local vegetable prices since imported vegetables only constitute 0.51 percent of the total local vegetable produce, he said.

The importer cited the price of imported broccoli at P141 per kilo, which is comparatively lower than the local price of P30 to P40 per kilo.

Gokongweis to put up more stores

By Elena R. Torrijos

THE GOKONGWEI family and their Japanese partners are planning to expand their current network of 32 Mini Stop convenience stores in Metro Manila to 320 stores by the end of 2006 with more than P5 billion annual gross sales.

The Philippine Mini Stop operations is operated by Robinsons Convenience Store Inc., a joint venture established in 2000 by the Robinsons Retail Group and Japanese firms Mitsubishi Corp. and Mini Stop Co. Ltd.

In a news briefing on Friday following a presentation to Mini Stop suppliers, RCSI business unit group head Johnson Robert Go Jr. said RCSI was plowing some P150 million to set up 60 more stores by year's end.

The company aims to set up 75 additional stores in 2004, 75 more in 2005 and 80 in 2006 all in Metro Manila, Go announced.

In line with its strategy of allowing franchisees to operate bulk of the Mini Stop stores, RCSI recently transferred five stores to a first batch of franchisees that inked a 10-year contract.

At present, the franchise fee for a Mini Stop convenience store is roughly P1 million.

"We are aggressively campaigning to get more franchisees. Ideally, we would like to maintain a maximum of 25 percent of the stores as company owned," Go said.

Toyota, Honda at odds over proposed shift in excise tax system

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

TWO of the country's biggest auto assemblers have taken an opposing stand on the proposed shift in the government's excise tax system.

Toyota Motor Philippines Corp., the country's leading vehicle assembler, is urging the government to maintain the tax exemption that Asian-utility vehicles currently enjoy.

No. 2 auto assembler Honda Cars Philippines Inc., on the other hand, is asking the Senate to pass a law seeking a shift from what it considers as a "lopsided tax structure" to a value-based excise tax system.

In a position paper submitted to the Board of Investments, Toyota Philippines president Nobuharu Tabata said the AUV was the most suitable vehicle for the market development phase of the country.

The AUV uses the most local parts, has the highest local value added and its production employs the most jobs, Tabata said.

With these value-added features, he said, the AUV has a better chance of developing as a "long-term Philippine winner." Tabata said the government's plan to amend the vehicle excise tax system, specifically the discontinuation of the tax-free status of AUVs, could affect the domestic sales of these vehicles and derail plans by local assemblers to export completely built up units.

In a letter to Sen. Ralph Recto, meanwhile, Honda Philippines president Mitsunari Takano endorsed "the imposition of the new excise tax system, as this will create a level playing field among automobile manufacturers, where each one can operate under fair and honest competition."

Takano also said reports that the government lost some P1.5 billion because of the tax exemption that the Honda CR-V—classified as an AUV but regarded by rival assemblers as a luxury vehicle—was enjoying was "misleading."

"Honda, being the leading passenger car make from 1996 to 2001, is the single biggest excise tax contributor in the automotive industry," Takano said.

"Since Honda opened its factory in 1991, it has remitted P9.8 billion in tax payments by the end of 2002. Also, Honda's total tax payments reached P1.449 billion in 2002 from P1.437 billion in 2001," he added.

POSSIBLE GLUT

Oil down 1% on Venezuela; Opec eyes cut

SINGAPORE—NYMEX crude futures fell almost one percent in electronic ACCESS dealings on Monday as Venezuelan oil exports continued to recover, while Opec ministers warned of a possible glut in supplies in the second quarter.

US light crude for March delivery traded 30 cents down at $33.21 a barrel, extending Friday's 34-cent loss in New York.

Trading volumes were light at 1,672 lots with Singapore oil markets closed for the Lunar New Year holiday.

"There's very little going on. Some news over the weekend with Venezuelan strikers going back to work in the non-oil sector. Otherwise we're waiting on Iraq again," said a broker in New York.

The threat of war in Iraq, the world's eighth-biggest oil exporter, continued to keep crude well above $30 a barrel and less than $2 shy of a 26-month high over $35 touched in January.

"War is still very much on the cards and that is likely to counter any downward pressure on prices from Venezuela coming back to work," said David Thurtell, commodities strategist at Commonwealth Bank in Sydney.

US Secretary of State Colin Powell is due to present to the UN Security Council on Wednesday evidence that Iraq has been operating programs to build banned weapons.

Top UN disarmament officials Hans Blix and Mohamed ElBaradei are expected to return to Baghdad at the end of the week as part of last-ditch efforts to secure Iraqi compliance with UN resolutions.

Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez said on Sunday crude output had increased to nearly 1.8 million barrels per day, more than half of the 3.1 million bpd pumped in November.

Output hit a low at 150,000 bpd after the strike began on Dec. 2.

Oil strikers say current output stands at just over one million bpd, although they acknowledge it is rising.

Data from shipping agents showed Venezuela's oil exports at 890,000 bpd in the week to Feb. 1, up from 550,000 bpd a week earlier but still only one-third of pre-strike levels of 2.7 million bpd.

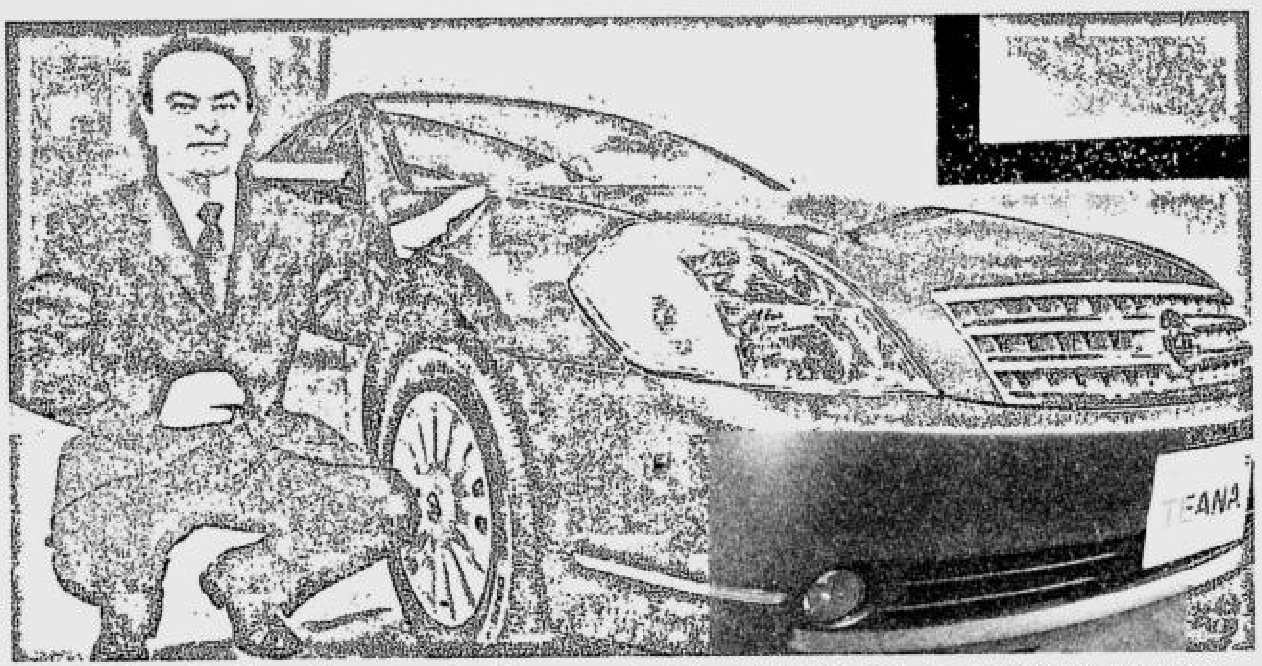
Opposition leaders, who want Chavez to resign, scaled back the nine-week action on Sunday in the non-oil sector. The strike continues in the vital oil sector.

A return of oil sales from Venezuela, the world's fifth-biggest oil exporter, could put some pressure on the Opec producers' group to rein in output.

Opec ministers warned at the weekend that oil markets could tip into oversupply in the second quarter. Opec is due to meet again in Vienna on March 11.

In January, it agreed to raise official production limits by 1.5 million bpd on Feb. 1 to offset the Venezuelan outage.

"If there is danger of a glut, we have to meet and rectify the situation. Definitely we (Opec) are concerned about the second quarter," UAE Oil Minister Obaid bin Saif al-Nasseri said on Sunday at an oil conference. *Reuters*


CARLOS Ghosn, President of Japan's number three car maker Nissan Motor Co., Ltd., poses with its all-new luxury sedan "Teana" during a press preview at a Tokyo hotel. The new Teana is retailing in Japan between 2.25 million yen ($18,750) and 2.77 million yen ($23,083). AFP

Japan business activity slows in Jan., survey says

TOKYO—Business activity among Japanese manufacturers slowed in January as a weaker global economy took a toll on both output and exports, dragging down the sector's performance index in a Reuters survey to a 10-month low.

The Reuters/Nomura/JMMA Purchasing Managers' Index, released on Monday, also showed manufacturers cut jobs during the month.

The overall PMI, which gives an early snapshot of manufacturing activity, fell to its lowest level in 10 months to 47.8, down from 49.4 in December.

It was also the fifth straight month in which the composite index stayed below the neutral 50 level, signaling a continued deterioration in Japan's manufacturing activity.

The output index, one of several indices that make up the PMI, fell to 49.2 from 52.0, the biggest fall on record. It was also the first time it had dropped below the critical 50 mark since last March. It had risen to 52.0 in December from 51.5 in November.

"The January data therefore indicate a reversal of the upward momentum recorded in December and suggest that the recovery of the manufacturing sector seen last year has been short-lived," said a commentary on the survey's results.

The index for new orders also worsened for the fifth straight month, to 46.5 from 49.3, the survey showed. *Reuters*

Mitsubishi Electric back in black in Q3

TOKYO—Chip and industrial electronics maker Mitsubishi Electric Corp. said on Monday it moved back into the black in the latest quarter, reaping rewards from cost cuts, and kept its full-year forecasts despite economic uncertainly.

Mitsubishi Electric, Japan's fourth-largest chipmaker and the smallest of its five industrial electronics conglomerates, reported a 1.1 billion yen ($9.18 million) net profit for its fiscal third quarter ended on Dec. 31, compared with the year-earlier period's 38.4 billion yen loss.

Mitsubishi Electric and Japan's other industrial electronics conglomerates posted hefty losses in the last business year to March as the IT slump and heated global competition ate into earnings, especially in semiconductors and telecoms equipment.

The company is reporting quarterly earnings for the first time this year and most analysts did not release official forecasts for third-quarter results.

They noted, however, that the industrial electronics makers' business is usually weak in the first and third quarters, with corporate and public-sector customers often booking big-ticket items such as power plants and industrial equipment near the end of each half-year.

The company left its full-year profit forecasts unchanged, projecting a 25 billion yen net profit, after the prior year's 78 billion yen loss, while operating profit was seen at 65 billion yen versus a 68 billion yen loss.

The company forecast full-year revenues at 3.65 trillion yen, unchanged from the year before. *Reuters*

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Wall Street banks lend more to win business

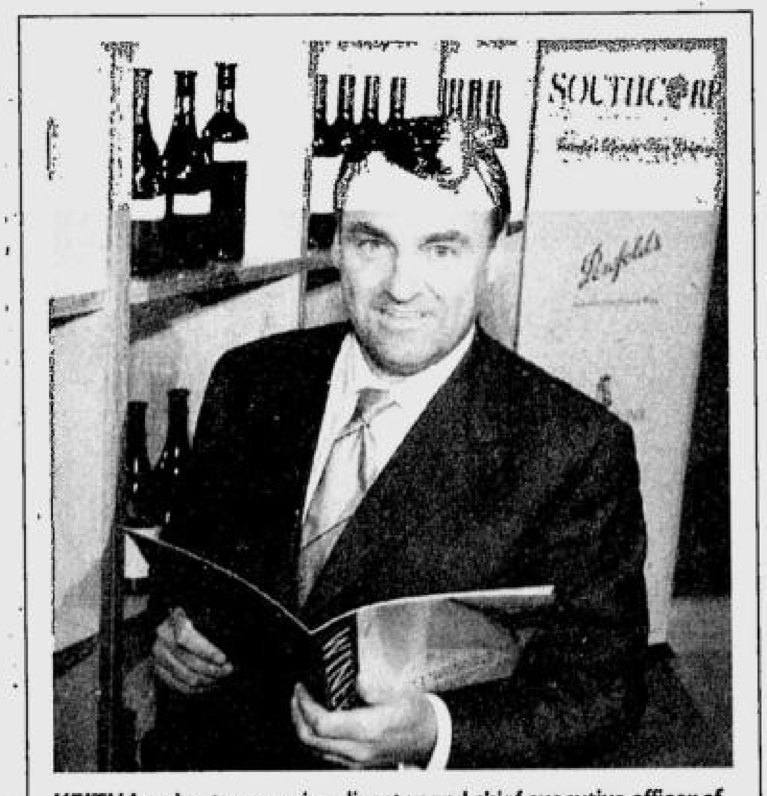
NEW YORK—Call it quid pro quo—Wall Street's biggest banks are increasingly being required to take on the risk of making commercial loans in exchange for lucrative investment banking deals.

Chief executives like Merrill Lynch's Stanley O'Neal to J.P. Morgan Chase's William Harrison seemed to finally concur this week as they addressed investors at a New York conference. Banks that hope to win the big stock and bond deals will have to be players in the lending game.

That message resonated when AOL Time Warner reportedly selected Citigroup's Salomon Smith Barney, Deutsche Bank AG and Bear Stearns Cos to manage the initial public offering of its Time Warner Cable unit. The IPO, which could raise close to $4 billion, is expected to be the year's largest.

The selection stood out because Deutsche Bank and Bear Stearns are not top stock underwriters. Bear Stearns was likely rewarded for a long standing advisory role to AOL, but Deutsche, it was reported, landed the business after it agreed to fund half of a $2.1 billion bridge loan with Citigroup.

"Whether you take market risk or credit risk, there's no doubt that there's a trend in that direction," Goldman Sachs group Chair and Chief Executive Henry Paulson told investors Tuesday at the Salomon Smith Barney sponsored conference. *Reuters*



KEITH Lambert, managing director and chief executive officer of Southcorp Limited, pictured before announcing the company's 2002 Interim Results in Sydney. Lambert quit Australia's largest wine group Feb. 3 after its board requested his resignation amid financial troubles and flagging share price. AFP

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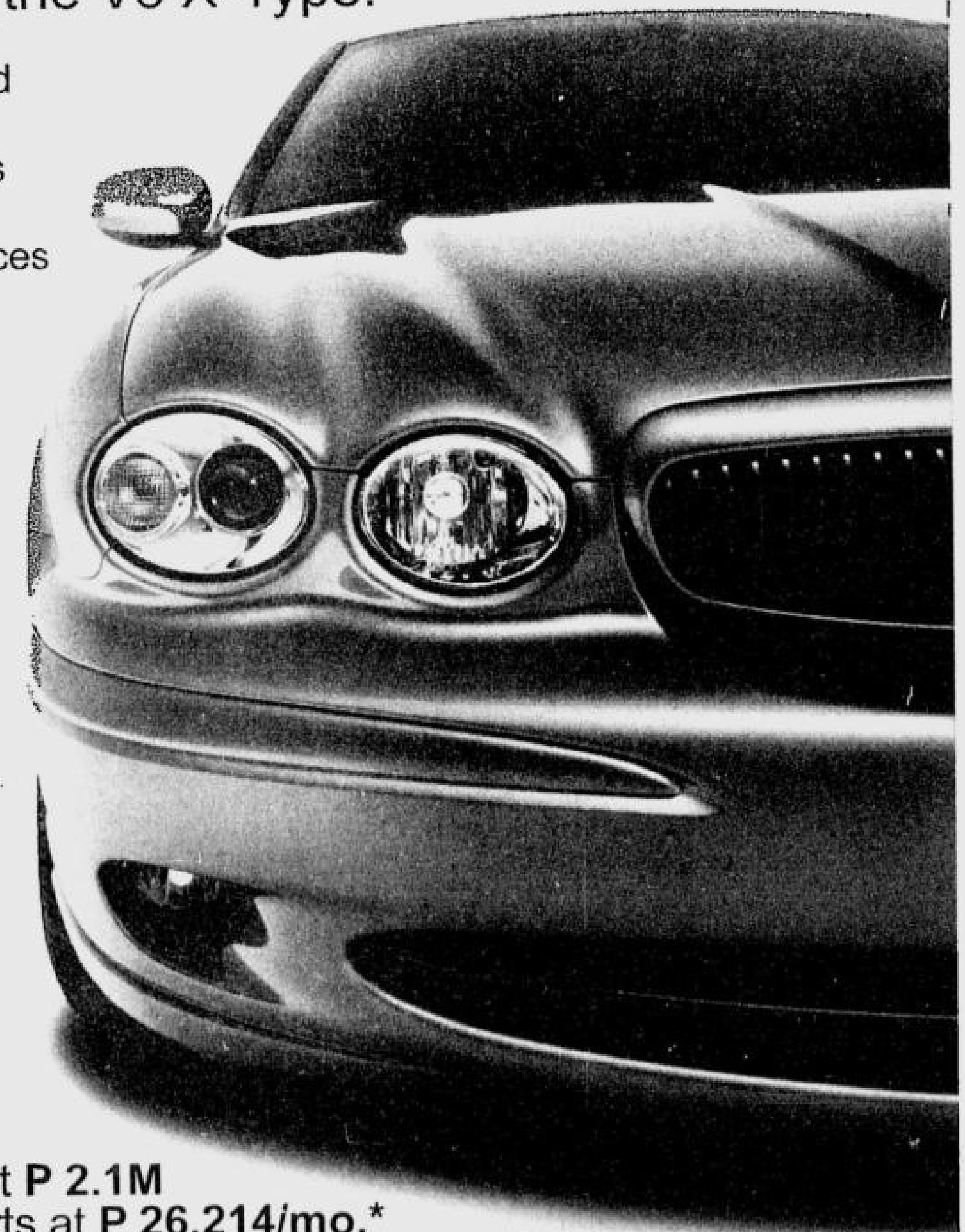

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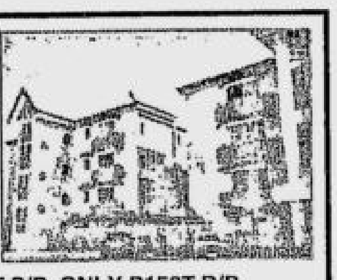

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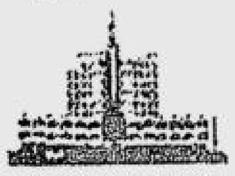

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PUBLIC NOTICES

LEGAL NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that the estate of the late FELICIDAD S. TABERNERO has been extra-judicially settled with waiver of rights, participation & ownership among her heirs as per Doc. 212, Page 44, Book I, Series of 2003, before Atty. Clarissa Serima-Ramos, Notary Public Mandaluyong City.
(PDI-Feb. 4, 11, & 18 2003)

PERSONAL

-Thank You Holy Spirit From: Earl Roy Del Rosario
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February 3, 2003

INVITATION TO PRE-QUALIFY AND TO BID

The Provincial Government of Isabela is inviting interested Manufacturers, Wholesalers, importers and Exclusive Distributors/Suppliers to participate in the pre-qualification and to participate in the sealed public bidding for the procurement of Office Supplies,Drugs and Medicines, Surgical, Laboratory, X-ray and Dental Supplies, Hospital instruments/equipments, Linens for the various offices and hospitals in the province.

BIDDING ACTIVITIES:

Availability of Pre-bid requirements	- Starting Feb. 5, 2003, Mondays to Fridays, 8:00 a.m.to 5:00 p.m. at the Office of the Provincial General Services Alibagu, Ilagan, Isabela
Deadline of Submission of Requirements	- February 18, 2003 at the Office Provincial General Services, Alibagu, Ilagan, Isabela
Pre-Qualification Conference	- February 20, 2003 at 10:00 a.m. at the Governors Office Mini Conference Hall, Capitol, Alibagu, Ilagan, Isabela
Bidding	- March 10, 2003 at 10:00 a.m. at the Governors Office Mini-Conference Hall, Capitol, Alibagu, Ilagan, Isabela

Complete set of bid forms/proposals may be acquired form the Provincial General Services Office by the pre-qualified supplier/dealer after payment of non-refundable bidding fee of P1,500.00 and Governors Permit of P500.00 at the Provincial Treasurer's Office. At the date of bidding, sealed bids in triplicate forms shall be submitted with refundable bidders bond equivalent to 5% of the total bid price but in no case shall exceed P20,000.00. Bidders bond shall be in the form of cash only. No personal check shall be accepted as bidders bond.

The Committee on Awards reserves the right to reject any or all bids waived, defects or informality found therein and will only accept bids considered most advantageous to the government. Its decision shall be final and binding.

(Sgd.) **FAUSTINO S. DY, JR.**
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(PDI - Feb 4, 2003)

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"... Now you are sad, but I will see you again, and your hearts will be filled with gladness, the kind of gladness that no one can take away from you." **(John 16:22)**

ELENA ALCAZAR CARPIO

Peacefully left us to rest in the loving embrace of GOD, our FATHER and her husband, ***JOSE A. CARPIO SR.*** *on February 3, 2003 at the age of 92.*

Her loving children:
- **Ping** & **Ding Silos-Carpio** and **Lito**, **Dee Carpio-Jimenez** and **Mitchie**
- **Linda** & **Gerry Quibilan** and **Dodgie Limgenco**
- **Leni** & **Art Panganiban** and **Marilen** & **Alex Yaptangco**, **Archie**, **Celine** & **Patrick Hannett**, **Tet** & **Noy Mañalac** and **Mabel Panganiban**
- **Jaime A. Carpio** (†)
- **Louise** & **Adolf Ledesma** and **Arnie**, **Babsie** & **Alvin Sanico**, **Casey** and **Denny Ledesma**
- **Joey** & **Mary Joji Valle-Carpio**
- **Liz** & **Tony Venezuela** and **Camille**, **JA**, **Belay** and **Iggy**

And all the great and great-great grandchildren invite friends, relatives and pious readers to join us in celebrating **Mommy Ellen's** passage to eternal life.

Her remains lie in state at Our Lady of Mount Carmel National Shrine, Doña Juana Rodriguez, Broadway, New Manila, Quezon City.

She will be laid to rest on Thursday, February 6, 2003 after the 9:00 a.m. Mass. Interment will be at the Loyola Memorial Park, Marikina City.

BELEN RAYMUNDO OCAMPO

Belen was born 19 January 1933 and died at the age of 70.

Her husband **Lamberto**; children **Ambeth**, **Aleth** & **Jojo Mapa**, **Anna** & **Raymund Sarmiento**; grandchildren **Anna Nicole**, **Isabel** and **Gabrielle Maria**; brother **Melchor** and sisters **Amor** and **Cora**; other relatives and friends request the readers to pray for her eternal happiness.

Her remains lie in state at the Sanctuario de San Antonio, Forbes Park, Makati City.

Cremation will be on Tuesday, February 4, 2003 after the 5 p.m. Mass.

CARLOS MORALES VELAYO

13 March 1914 – 27 January 2003

We thank you

for your presence, your prayers, your e-mail and text messages,
your kind words, your cards and flowers.
You have been of great comfort to us during our time of bereavement.
Please do not be sad for us. Rather, be happy that Carlos is now with God.

Carlos is now with Adelaida (**†**), our mother, and Angel (**†**), our brother.
Together they will love us for eternity. We are so happy for them.
They live on in our hearts and in our memories and most specially
in our love for our children.
Surely they are here today, smiling at all of us.

We love you all and we thank you.

Haydee, Ronald & Maria Lina (Santos) and Carlos Jr. & Carmen (Lim)

Raoul (**†**), Martha and Gabby;
Maria Albina, Adelaida & Luca Calamandrel, and Carlos Primo III;
Carmina, Christine, Clarissa, Carlos Lorenzo and Catherine Consuelo

Safely Home
I am home in heaven, dear ones, oh,
so happy and so bright! There is perfect joy
and beauty in this everlasting light. All the
pain and grief is over, every restless tossing passed;
I am now at peace forever, safely home
in Heaven at last.

Estrellita Cortez-Pascual

Certified Public Accountant, MBA
Former Provincial Auditor, Commission on Audit (COA), Region III

Peacefully rests in the infinite Grace and Goodness of the Lord on the 1st of February 2003 at the age of 62.

Her husband Dan; children Mabel & Ronnie, Cathy & Dawks, Jojo & Yvette, and Rachel; grandchildren Monique & Ding-ding, Red & Cian, Jonash and Joshua; brothers and sisters, relatives and friends request your prayers for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her remains lie in state at 433 Peceson St., Poblacion, Floridablanca, Pampanga.

She will be laid to rest on Thursday, February 6, 2003 at 3:00 p.m. Interment will be at the Floridablanca Cemetery.

Nanay Baby is now peacefully resting in the Kingdom of the Lord...

Dr. Victor Balagot Mayo

"Life will never be the same again"

A Charismatic Physician

Peacefully joined our Lord, his father Carlino Mayo on January 28, 2003.

His loving wife **Glory**; daughters **Lorivi**, **Shaia** and son **Leo Carlo**; mother **Purificasion**; brothers **Arthur**, **Eddie**; sister **Luz**, patients, in-laws, nephews, nieces, grandchildren, relatives, and friends are assured by the promise of God of eternal life.

His body lies in Bayanihan Village, Catbangen, San Fernando, La Union.

Interment will be on Wednesday, February 5, 2003 at Holy Gardens La Union Park after the 2:00 p.m. Holy Mass at Saint Williams Cathedral, San Fernando, La Union.

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1501 C.M. Recto Ave. cor. T. Mapua, Manila;
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732-2827
LA FUNERARIA PAZ, INC.
143 G. Araneta Ave. cor. Kaliraya St., Quezon
City Tels. 749-3806 to 11,
712-3001 743-6502 or 05
LA FUNERARIA PAZ, INC.
Dr. A. Santos Ave., Sucat, Parañaque;
Tels. 820-1592, 825-9947, 825-8635
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70 Naguilian Rd., Baguio City;
Tel. (074) 443-3337, (074) 442-3117
LA FUNERARIA SAPINOSO
G. Tirona St., Imus, Cavite, Tels. (046) 471-
3386, (046) 471-4417, (046) 571-1978
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EDSA cor. Bernardino St., Guadalupe, Makati
City Tels. 895-1011 to 19
LOYOLA MEMORIAL PARK CHAPELS & CREMATORY SERVICES
Loyola Memorial Park, A. Bonifacio Avenue,
Tañong, Marikina City
Tels. 941-3196 to 98; 941-3676; Telefax 941-
3577
MARIAN MEMORIAL CHAPELS
Marcos Hiway, Antipolo, Rizal, Tels. 645-1856;
682-0209 682 0210
MARCELO FUNERAL HOMES
Tels. 283-1613, 273-8922

"I have fought a good fight,
I have finished the race,
I have kept the faith.
From now on a merited
crown awaits me..." **2 Timothy 4:7-8**

ATTY. EDGAR B. UYTIEPO

who was called Home by Our Heavenly Father on January 31, 2003

His loving wife **Baby**; daughters **Olive**, **Cybill** and **Addy**; mother, **Rosing**; brothers and sisters; in-laws; relatives and friends are assured by the Word of God that he is now reunited with Our Father.

His body lies in state at Rolling Hills Memorial Chapels (Chapel of Faith II), Mandalagan, Bacolod City.

Interment will be on Saturday, February 8, 2003 at Rolling Hills Memorial Park, Bacolod City, after the 2:00 p.m. Holy Mass.

MT. SINAI MEMORIAL CHAPEL
Arellano St., Dagupan City, Tels. (075) 515-
5060 522-8783, (0917) 520-5001
NACIONAL MEMORIAL HOMES
264 G. Araneta Avenue, Quezon City;
Tels. 713-5231 to 35, 714-0867, 714-0868
OUR LADY OF PEACE MEMORIAL PARK CHAPEL & SERVICES, INC.
No. 6 Cangma St., Antipolo City 1870
Tel No. 697-0782, 697-0026, 650-7426;
Fax 697-2764
POPULAR MEMORIAL CHAPELS, INC.
214 Rizal Ave., Sta. Cruz, Manila;
Tel Nos. 254-0807, 254-0830
ROLLING HILLS MEMORIAL CHAPELS INC.
Ground Flr. Rolling Hills Chapel, 27th-Lacson
St., Mandalagan, Bacolod City. Tel. 433-7132
RIZAL FUNERAL HOMES
438 Cementina St., Pasay City;
Tels. 831-1204
Sucat Branch 8187 Dr. A. Santos Ave.,
Sucat, Parañaque City
Tels. 826-1378; 826-9882, (0915) 712-1220

SANTUARIO DE SAN ANTONIO PARISH
Forbes Park, Makati City, Tel. Nos. 843-
8838/30, Fax No. 843-9223
SANTUARIO DE SAN JOSE PARISH
East Greenhills, Mandaluyong City;
Telefax 724-4139, 725-2044
ST. ALPHONSUS MARY DE LIGOURI PARISH
Magallanes Village, Makati City,
Tels. 852-8228, 852-7284
ST. MARK MEMORIAL CHAPEL
16-15 G. Tuazon cor. Loreto St., Sampaloc,
Manila, Tels. 749-3679, 781-1772
ST. PETER FUNERAL HOMES
296 Quezon Ave., Quezon City,
Tels. 372-5084 410-9266/67
VERONICA MEMORIAL HOMES
Official NBI Morgue 517-A Arnaiz St., Pasay
City; Tels. 831-3797, 844-7846;
843-1801 845-4836
WELINGTON FUNERAL SERVICES
1511 Gen. Luna St., Paco, Manila,
Tels. 522-8846, 522-9436, 400-5304

Our Dearly Beloved Tatay

Atty. ROLANDO J. CUARTERO, Sr.

Now peacefully rests in the infinite Grace and Goodness of the Lord on the 1st day of February, 2003.

His wife **Ester**; brother **Carlos**; loving children **Florliza**, **Ronaldo** and **Jeanette**, **Christina** and **Jason**, **Rolando Jr.**, **Rochester**, **Rochelle**, **Rolando III**, and **Roliza Carla**; grandchildren, relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains will be transferred today from his residence in Cubao, Quezon City to the Sto. Niño Chapel in his hometown in Castillano, San Leonardo, Nueva Ecija.

Interment will be on Wednesday, February 5, 2003 at the Gapan Cemetery.

Message of Thanks

We, the family of the late

ATTY. RAMON DELOS REYES TUANGCO

Died in the Grace of our Lord on 24 January 2003 at the age of 77

He is survived by his wife **Lutgarda Tuangco**, children **Stella & Jake**, **Rosa & Hilda**, **Fernando (†) & Lorie**, and **Alfredo**, grandchildren **Jasper**, **Josephine**, **Jessella**, **Kate**, **Jackie**, **Philjohn & Philbert**, and other relatives request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

Interment was held on Sunday, February 2, 2003, 2:00 p.m. at the North Cemetery, La Loma, Metro Manila.

We sincerely convey our deepest gratitude and appreciation to all who offered Masses and prayers, sent flowers and messages of sympathy, gave donations, visited and kept vigil, attended funeral rites and days of prayer, and who, in countless and immeasurable ways, condoled with and comforted us in our moment of grief.

Maraming, maraming SALAMAT PO

Republic of the Philippines
Department of Health
'AMANG' RODRIGUEZ MEDICAL CENTER
Marikina City
"PHIC accredited health care provider"

HOSPITAL INFRASTRUCTURE BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE (HIBAC)

INVITATION TO PREQUALIFY/ELIGIBILITY SCREENING AND TO BID

The 'Amang' Rodriguez Medical Center (ARMC) thru the Hospital Bids and Awards Commitee (HIBAC) is inviting bids from Accredited Contractors of the Philippine Contractors Accreditation Board (PCAB) with minimum license category of "A" and registration of **MEDIUM B** for Building and Industrial Plant for the **PROJECT: CONSTRUCTION OF TWO (2) STOREY HOSPITAL BUILDING** at ARMC.

The dates to be followed are:

1.	Submission of Letter of Intent, PCAB License and Registration (bring Original Copies of Contractor's License) and Issuance of Eligibility Documents.		January 27 & February 4, 2003
2.	Submission of Duly Accomplished Eligibility Documents		February 10, 2003
3.	Posting of Eligible Contractors		February 26, 2003
4.	Issuance of Bid Tender Documents		February 27 & 28, 2003
5.	Pre-Bid Conference		March 14, 2003
6.	Submission of Bids (deadline)	10:00 AM	March 28, 2003
7.	Opening of Bids	10:30 AM	March 28, 2003

All of the above activities shall be held at the ARMC Conference Room, Second Floor, Administrative Building.

The complete set of bid tender documents may be purchased by the interested eligible bidders upon payment of a non-refundable fee of Ten Thousand Pesos (P10,000.00).

HIBAC reserves the right to reject any or all bids without offering any reason, waive any formality and award the contract to any bidder whose proposal as evaluated by HIBAC is the most advantageous to the government. The HIBAC assumes no obligation to compensate or indemnify the bidders for any expense or loss that maybe incurred in the preparation of bids, nor does it guarantee that an award will be made.

The Approved Budget Cost for the project will be announced during the Pre-Bid Conference.

(Sgd.) **RODOLFO P. GREGORIO, MD, FPCS**
Chairman, HIBAC

(PDI - Jan. 27 & Feb. 4, 2003)

Republic of the Philippines
NATIONAL ECONOMIC AND DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
Region 10 Office
Capistrano and Echem Streets
Cagayan de Oro City

INVITATION TO PRE-QUALIFY AND TO BID

The NEDA Region 10 Office invites interested Consultants to apply for pre-qualification for the conduct of the Feasibility Study on the Libertad Municipal Waterworks Improvement Project. The municipality of Libertad, Misamis Oriental is approximately 40 kilometers west of Cagayan de Oro City. Applicants must have adequate experience, financial capacity and technical capability to undertake the Study.

The Study will include, among other tasks, an environmental impact assessment. The approved budget for the consultancy services is P794,012.

To obtain pre-qualification forms, interested parties must submit a Letter of Intent (LOI), which must be received by this Office not later than 18 February 2003. Pre-qualification forms include Terms of Reference. These forms are available on 29 January 2003 to 18 February 2003 at NEDA Region 10 Office.

All required pre-qualification documents must then be submitted to the NEDA Region 10 Office not later than **7:00 p.m. of 28 February 2003.**

Prospective bidders will be evaluated based on established criteria. Only those Consultants who will be included in the short list will be invited to participate in subsequent bidding.

For more information, you may contact us at the following addresses and telephone numbers: NEDA Region 10 Office, Capistrano and Echem Streets, Cagayan de Oro City; E-mail address: neda10@norminet.org.ph; Telephone/Fax Nos: (08822) 723-436; (08822) 728-072; (088) 856-1920.

All communications should be addressed to:
Mrs. Ro-Ann A. Bacal
Asst. Regional Director
Chairperson, Bids and Awards Committee
NEDA Region 10 Office
Capistrano & Echem Streets
Cagayan de Oro City

The NEDA Region 10 Office reserves the right to accept or reject any or all bids, to waive any defect or infirmity therein, or accept complying bid considered most advantageous to the Office. It may cancel the bidding process at any time prior to the award of the contract without thereby incurring any liability to the affected bidder/s or any obligation to inform the affected bidder/s of the basis of the action of the Office.

(Sgd.) RO-ANN A. BACAL
Assistant Regional Director
Chairperson, Bids and Awards Commitee

(PDI – Feb. 4, 2003)

Republic of the Philippines
Department of Agrarian Reform
Foreign-Assisted Projects Office
CENTRAL PROJECT OFFICE

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Government of the Philippines, through the Department of Agrarian Reform (DAR), has received an ODA Loan from JAPAN BANK FOR INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION (hereinafter referred to as JBIC) towards the cost of Mindanao Sustainable Settlement Area Development (MINSSAD) Project, and intends to apply a portion of the proceeds of the loan in the total amount of five million pesos (PhP5,000,000.00) to payments under the contract of procurement of equipment.

The DAR, Foreign-Assisted Projects Office (FAPsO), Pre-qualifications, Bids and Award Committee (PBAC) is inviting contractors to pre-qualify and bid for the following equipment:

LOT I: OFFICE EQUIPMENT

52 units of desktop personal computer
2 units of Laptop Computer
4 units of LCD Projector
24 units of Digital Camera
5 units of Digital Duplicator
1 unit of Fax Machine
16 units of Overhead Projector
16 sets of Audio/Video equipment

LOT II: FURNITURE & FIXTURES

32 units of Filing Cabinet
32 units of White Board
32 units of Office Table
32 units of Clerical Swivel Chair
80 units of Work Table
800 units of Mono Block Chairs

JBIC requires that bidders and contractors, as well as the Government of the Philippines-Department of Agrarian Reform, under contracts funded with JBIC ODA Loans and other Japanese ODA, observe the highest standard of ethics during the procurement and execution of such contracts. In pursuance of this policy, JBIC;

1. will reject a proposal for award if it determines that the bidder recommended for award has engaged in corrupt or fraudulent practices in competing for the contract in question;
2. will recognize a contractor as ineligible, for a period determined by JBIC, to be awarded a contract funded with JBIC ODA loans if it at any time determines that the contractor has engaged in corrupt or fraudulent practices in competing for, or in executing, another contract funded with JBIC ODA Loans or other Japanese ODA.

Interested eligible parties are invited to apply for eligibility and to submit sealed bids using Two Envelope System.

- List of eligibility requirements shall be available for issuance on February 4-14, 2003.
- Closing date and time for submission of eligibility requirements shall be on February 17, 2003, 5:00 P.M., Manila Time.
- Letter of Notice to Prospective Bidders shall be issued on February 20, 2003.
- Bid Documents shall be issued to Pre-Qualified Bidders on February 21-25, 2003, upon presentation of a valid Notification Letter and payment of a non-refundable fee of two thousand pesos (P2,000).
- Closing Date and Time of submission of bids is March 14, 2003 at 9:00 A.M. Bids shall be opened in the presence of the participating bidders on the same day at 10:00 A.M.

All documents pertaining to the tender are available at DAR-FAPsO, Administrative Unit, 2nd Floor, FAPsO Building, Department of Agrarian Reform, Elliptical Road, Diliman, Quezon City.

The DAR reserves the right to reject any or all bids, and accept the offer most advantageous to the Government.

(Sgd.) **JOSE MARI B. PONCE**
Assistant Secretary, SSO and
Executive Director, FAPsO

Inquirer--Feb. 4 & 14, 2003

Sweet Nothings

People often celebrate Valentine's day by giving flowers, chocolates and cards, but why not do something unique for a change?

This coming **February 14, 2003**, Valentine's day, **Inquirer Messageboard** will give way to personal greetings, love quotes and declaration of love for that special someone in your life.

Avail of this promo at a discounted rate of P50 per line and P150 per column centimeter box ads.

•Rates are VAT exclusive•

SAMPLE ADS

lane,
"LOVE" How can such a small word mean so much?
Happy Valentine's day!
love,
Red

size: 1 col x 4 cm

Valentine's like you, Trish, don't come along everyday. I love you. – Paul

size: 3 lines

My heart beats for you and only for you, Tim. This Valentine's day, let's paint the town red – Mimi

size: 4 lines

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
MESSAGEBOARD

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS
CLASSIFIEDS

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MUNTINLUPA CITY
☎ 850-8405

PROVINCIAL BRANCH:
PASONG TAMO AVE. COR. YAGUE & MASCARDO STS.
MAKATI CITY
☎ 897-8808 loc. 243
☎ 899-4427(Direct)
897-8425
e-mail: nabad@inquirer.com.ph

Republic of the Philippines
REGIONAL TRIAL COURT
5th Judicial Region
Branch 24
Naga City

SANYO PHILIPPINES INCORPORATED,
Plaintiff,

-versus- CIVIL CASE NO. 2001-0199

SPOUSES ROLANDO AND IRMA FRANCISCO,
doing business under the name and style,
MDJ MARKETING,
Defendants.
X -X

DECISION

Plaintiff Sanyo Philippines Corporation, represented by its manager, Patricio Duran, filed this claim for sum of money against defendant-spouses Rolando and Irma Francisco.

A prayer for the issuance of a writ of preliminary attachment was included by plaintiff in the complaint and the same was granted by the court.

Deputy Sheriff Alfonso Don, Jr., proceeded to attach the real properties in the name of defendants covered by the following tax declarations: 99-013-00312, 99-013-00313, 99-013-00144, all situated in the province of Albay (Sheriff's Report dated January 29, 2001; page 45; Records). However, a third-party claim was filed by Wilson Climaco and Marites.Climaco concerning the two-thirds (2/3) portion of the lot covered by tax declaration no. 99-013-00313. Pursuant to the Rules of Court, Rule 39, Section 16 and Rule 57, Section 12, Sheriff Don required plaintiff to file a bond to bind him to keep the property attached but plaintiff failed to comply.

On June 29, 2001, an amended complaint was filed by plaintiff to add the amount of P938,693.91 to its original claim of P482,552.15.

Summons was served on defendants thru publication since their whereabouts cannot be ascertained (Order August 31, 2001; Exh M).

On April 19, 2002, upon motion of plaintiff, defendants were declared in default. Thereafter, plaintiff was allowed to present his evidence *ex-parte* (Order dated April 19, 2002).

Plaintiff's evidence show that defendant-spouses Rolando and Irma Francisco are the owners of MDJ Marketing, an appliance store with principal office at Peñaranda St., Legazpi City and branches at Tabaco, Daet, Virac Polangui and Naga City and Muntinlupa City. MDJ Marketing is a dealer of Sanyo Philippines Incorporated. The latter delivers stocks to MDJ Marketing consisting of air conditioners, refrigerators, colored televisions, electric fans and washing machines.

Upon delivery, a statement of account is made, usually payable within sixty (60) days.

For the year 1999, the following deliveries were made by plaintiff to defendants:

EXHIBITS	DATE	INVOICE NO.	ITEM/S	QUANTITY	AMOUNT
Exh. A	11-4-99	65793	Colored TV airconditioners	10 7	P 222,400.00
Exh. B	11-15-99	65817	Refrigerator colored TV	2 6	P 75,520.00
Exh. C	11-22-99	65838	Refrigerator electric fans	20 7	P 241,250.00

TOTAL AMOUNT DUE PER STATEMENT OF ACCOUNT (Exh. D) = P 482,557.15

In addition to above-mentioned invoices, plaintiff delivered to defendants other articles under the following invoices:

EXHIBITS	DATE	INVOICE NO.	ITEM/S	QUANTITY	AMOUNT
Exh. E	7-7-99	65442	Refrigerator Colored TV	10 26	P 417,000.00
Exh. F	9-20-99	65645	Airconditioners	8	P 144,000.00
Exh. G	9-23-99	65659	Refrigerator Television Washing machine Electric fans Rice cooker Colored TV Electric fan	2 2 2 3 5 1 9	P 88,285.00
Exh. H	9-24-99	65668	Electric fan	9	P 1,635.00
Exh. I	9-29-99	65682	Refrigerator Colored TV	20 15	P 339,100.00
Exh. J	9-29-99	65683	Gas stoves		P 58,800.00

TOTAL AMOUNT DUE PER Exh. K	P 373,215.00
TOTAL AMOUNT DUE PER Exh. L	P 565,478.91

All the invoices were duly supported by statements of accounts which were received by defendants. According to plaintiff, the total obligation of defendants amounted to One Million Four Hundred Twenty One Thousand Two Hundred Fifty One and 6/100 Pesos (P1,421,251.06) and the latter promised that they will settle the same. They even intimated that they will secure a loan from one of the banks so that they will be able to settle the obligation. At present, MDJ Marketing has ceased doing business and all its branches are now closed.

Plaintiff has incurred the following documented expenses in connection with the filing of this case:

Filing Fee	P 5,438.80
Additional Filing Fee (amended complaint)	7,706.30
Publication fee of the summons and complain	P 20,000.00
Attachment Bond premium	2,484.65
TOTAL	P 35,629.75

The sale invoices indicate that in case the amount due or any balance shall become overdue, the buyer shall pay a penalty charge of 24% per annum and in the event of any legal action arising out of the transaction, an additional 25% of the total amount shall be charged as attorney's fees, costs shall also be charged.

The evidence presented by plaintiffs proves that defendants, incurred a total principal obligation of One Million Four Hundred Twenty One Thousand Two Fifty One (Php 1,421,251) Pesos. No payment was ever made by them since the amounts became due on their respective maturity dates, hence, plaintiff is entitled to the penalty stipulated. Plaintiff is also liable to pay an amount equivalent to 25% of the total amount dues for attorney's fee and cost of collection.

WHEREFORE, it having been established by preponderance of evidence that defendants are liable to plaintiffs for the deliveries of appliances which have not been paid by them on due date, defendant Sps. Rolando and Irma Francisco are hereby ordered to pay to plaintiffs jointly and severally the total of One Million Four Hundred Twenty One Thousand Two Fifty One (P1,421,251.00) Pesos, litigation expenses of P35,629.75 and 25% of the principal obligation of P1,421,251.00 as attorney's fees and costs of collection. Let this decision be published in a newspaper of general circulation in the Philippines, the expenses of which to be charged as part of the costs.

SO ORDERED.

Given this 5th day of September, 2002 at Naga City, Philippines.

(Sgd.) **CORAZON A. TORDILLA**
Judge

(PDI – February 4, 2003)

E-mail: pr_real_estate@inquirer.com.ph

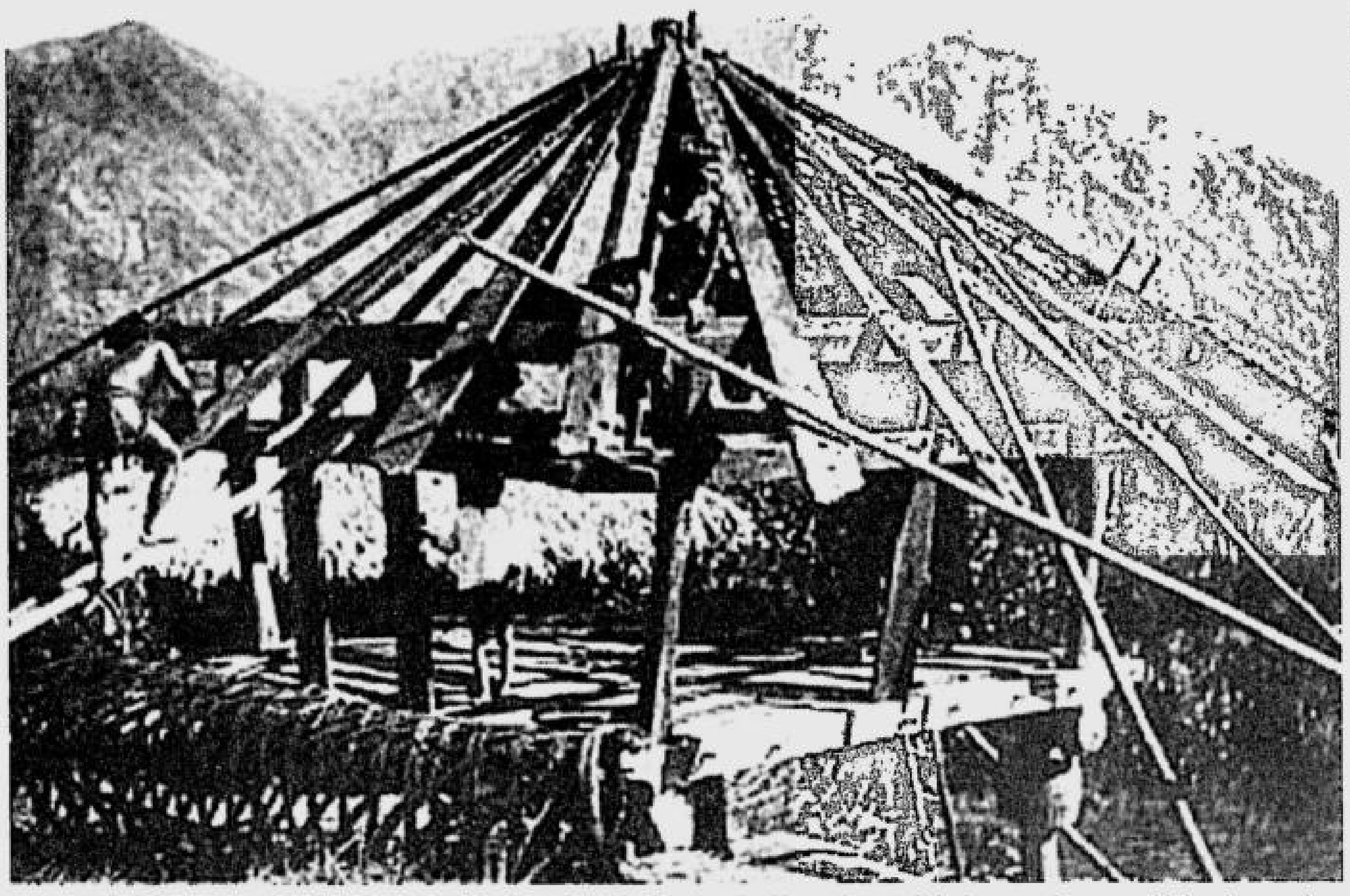
REAL ESTATE

Editor **Cesar D. Mangawang**

'PYRAMIDS IN THE TERRACES'

Mayoyao houses another RP wonder

By Tessa R. Salazar



LOOK MA, NO NAILS! Noted to withstand the strongest typhoons, the Ifugao houses' timbers are heavy and joined securely that the very weight tends to hold the house together. No iron nails were used to put this house together.

BARTON, R. F. "IFUGAO ECONOMICS. IN: UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA PUBLICATIONS IN AMERICAN ARCHEOLOGY AND ETHNOLOGY

FLOATING "red pyramids" in an endless stairway of giant green terraces on rolling mountains greet tourists in the municipality of Mayoyao in Ifugao, 41 km away from the more known town of Banaue.

The virtually unknown Mayoyao has a land area of 33,556 hectares, a population of about 16,000, and is just one of the 11 towns in Ifugao province in Northern Philippines. But if you ask the townsfolk, Mayoyao's rice terraces rival those that can be found in Banaue.

Cozily snuggled in the bosom of the central Cordillera mountain ranges, Mayoyao may, indeed, own the more majestic yet undiscovered rice terraces. Complementing these structures, considered the "8th wonder of the world," are the "red pyramids" or the Mayoyao native houses—seemingly planted on the terraces along with the rice stalks.

The native houses nowadays are built with red galvanized iron (GI) sheets (yero) for their roofing, which give them the distinctive red color instead of the traditional brown cogon roofing. Thus, red is now said to be the color of Mayoyao.

THE YARD of the house is paved with solid flat stones of granite gathered from a nearby river.

PICTURE ARCHIVE JOHN STOCKINGER (1984); HTTP://WWW.UNIVIE.AC.AT/VOELKERKUNDE/APSIS/AUFI/ETHNO/IFUGAO/IFUGAOH.HTM

Nevertheless, agamang roofs are still held tightly together with gilder, wood made out of red lawan.

The house granary can be found at the top portion of the house (imagine it as an attic of sorts). It is made in such a way that rodents and other pests cannot enter it.

A tetrahedronal structure perched on four wooden posts, the agamang was once likened by anthropologist Otley Beyer to the igloo of the Alaskan Eskimos.

The house, erected by fitting carefully shaped parts together, prompted Beyer to describe it as the first prefabricated house in the world, since it could be disassembled and transferred to another location.

Bobby Bongayon, Mayoyao's tourist guide, also explained that no iron nail was used to put these parts together. The house, however can withstand the strongest typhoons. Strong winds pass through the area of least resistance, and that, Bongayon said, is under the house.

The town's location along the majestic Cordillera ranges also protects it from strong winds from typhoons.

Bongayon related that only the sturdiest Philippine woods are used to make the native house. The posts are made out of molave, which can last for three generations.

The beams are made out of solid planks of narra—up to about 8" x 12"—while the floor and front walls are also made of solid narra four inches thick and about 30 to 40 inches in width.

For newly married Ifugao couples, building their own native house is a community affair. They call on relatives and neighbors to help in the construction.

The molave and narra lumbers are gathered from a forest 50 km away. Pinewood and other varieties of lumber to be used in the construction are gathered from a nearby forest and are carried on foot.

"The kind of wood used in construction—such as narra—enhances the social status of the owners," Bongayon noted.

The yard of the house, typically measuring 40 square meters, is paved with solid flat stones of granite gathered from a nearby river.

The flat stones are subjected to fire, cut and shaped. Then these are carefully pieced together like one giant jigsaw puzzle. Such skills are just some of the town's sources of pride.

A skillfully paved yard also symbolized a family's social stature.

Mayoyaowons are "very ceremonious people." They time their rituals according to their agricultural calendar upon which their livelihood revolves. It is in their houses where many ceremonies are held.

The first native ritual typically conducted in the house is called *hokgop* meaning "house warming." This lasts for five days. Bongayon said up to 10 pigs are butchered for this purpose. A large portion of the pork is served to relatives and neighbors. These portions are called *togma* and *bhangar*. The nearer the kinship, the bigger the *togma*.

Mayoyaowons believe this would be the best way to preserve family ties and keep close ties with the clan. In the days when Ifugao natives were engaged in tribal wars, such ties ensured the survival of the warrior and his family members.

Despite the seeming quaintness of the native house, it could surprisingly house up to 10 members of a family. When a child reaches his or her 10th birthday, the boy is sent to a common house for boys and a girl is sent to a common house for girls.

House construction step by step

BUILDING DREAMS

By Alexis A. Acacio, Ph.D.

(Second of two parts)

LAST week we focused on the different steps in constructing the structural components of your house. You can imagine the house as it would look—complete with its columns and beams, roof and everything you'll need to see to make up a house. Some finishing activities will follow to complete the project.

- Ceiling

The construction of the ceilings for every story of a building succeeds the removal of slab forms and the installation of the roof framing for the topmost level. Aside from protecting the house occupants from the effects of weather, the ceiling also provides platform for many esthetic provisions such as the chandeliers and other hanging decorations.

Wooden or steel ceiling joists, where the ceiling boards are nailed on to, are first installed under the slabs (or under the roof framing). This will form the shape of the ceiling, in cases of recessed, or any uneven ceilings. The panels are then put into place with nails, rivets or screws, smoothened with patching compound and painted with the desired color. Most new houses install steel instead of wooden ceiling joists and use rivets instead of nails to secure the panels. This is, in a way, advantageous compared to its wooden counterpart because it's lighter, doesn't warp, and is not a feast for termites.

CEILING

- Staircases

Staircases are one of the most useful, and decorative, features of the house. Its construction begins with the preparation of the concrete, steel or wooden base for the steps. For concrete staircases, forms are prepared and installed after which steel reinforcements are put in place. Once ready, concrete is poured and allowed to set and harden.

Wooden planks, tiles, granite or marble are used for the steps. These materials are measured, cut and planed, and laid one by one on fresh mortar, set on the concrete base and then leveled carefully.

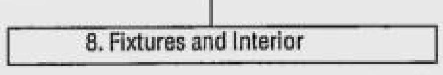
The steel or wooden railings, fabricated on or off site, are installed to dowels provided in the concrete base. Newel posts complete the stair railing after it is installed at the bottom of the stairs at the end of the railing. Once it is in place, the steps and the railings are sanded, waxed and applied with wood stain or varnish, depending on the preference of the owner. Finally, the railings are painted with the desired color or texture.

- Wall finishing

Many different kinds of finish can be put on a plain wall, many of which are molded in plaster. These provide texture to the house and when applied with paint, give the exterior of the house its identity. Wall finishes include *anay*(termite) finish, grooved finish, sandblast finish, and brick finish. Some finishes may even use different materials such as wood just to achieve the desired look and effect to the house. The only limit to the choices is imagination.

STAIRCASES

The finishing process



- Cabinets

Built-in cabinets, which serve a number of uses for the house and its owners, primarily storage and decoration, are included in the list of finishing activities. The biggest items of this type are the closets and kitchen cabinets. For wooden cabinets, a few layers of paint are added to finish the activity.

- Flooring

There are a number of options for floor and wall finishes of medium-sized houses, the most common of which, is wood and ceramic tiles. Materials may vary from plain cement finish to vinyl tiles to marble slabs depending on the choice and budget of the owner.

These materials are installed a tile at a time on a layer of wet plaster set on the floor slab, or in case of wooden and vinyl tiles, glued and fitted on the slabs. Grout is added between the tiles to enhance the appearance of the floor and to fill up the spaces between each tile. For wooden floors, a layer or two of wax or other chosen finish is applied on the floor and polished to shine.

- Painting

Painting is the last addition to the list of work that is placed in the concrete surfaces. Once the desired shapes are visible and ready, the final touches of color are applied to the gray concrete surfaces.

After plastering, a layer of concrete neutralizer is applied to the concrete surfaces to completely dry the concrete and to prevent bubbles from coming out of the concrete and ruining the paint job. White flat latex base, as well as patching compounds, is then applied to the treated surfaces. The interior walls and moldings are sanded to ensure smooth and flat surfaces before the final coatings of paint are applied or before the wallpapers are installed.

- Glass installation

One of the last activities in construction is the installation of glass panels in areas all around the house—windows, doors and cabinets. Once all activities considered hazardous to this brittle material have been done, a group of installers begin this task.

Glass is first cut to the desired size and shape and the sharp edges are smoothened by sanding. The cut panels are then brought to its designated locations and mounted into position over putty placed around the inside edges of the windows. Another layer of putty is applied over and around the edges of the glass to secure it. Once dry, the putty is painted with the desired final color.

- Fixtures and interior

Fixtures for the kitchen, bathroom and lights are then installed when the project is almost complete. The other interior details are also completed. A number of final touches may still need to be done, some of which are unique for every house. Your builders will most probably have the tools and the ability to give the house individuality to esthetically satisfy you, the owner.

The role of the builder

Your builder or contractor should know all the details to a house and its construction, for which they are responsible. Regular inspection of the site by the architects and engineers should be made to ensure that what is being built comes out as what is drawn on paper.

Quality control should be strictly imposed in the construction and supplies needed in the site should be delivered on time for uninterrupted construction. It is their responsibility to make sure everything is on schedule, within budget and there is minimal waste of materials.

(Alexis A. Acacio is an associate professor of civil engineering at the University of the Philippines. He is also a marketing and technical consultant to various real estate developers and construction companies. For comments and advice you may reach him at aaacacio@pacific.net.ph. or fax 932-6986.)

Furniture show gets new venue

THE CHAMBER of Furniture Industries in the Philippines proudly announces the new venue for the Philippine International Furniture Show 2003 (PIFS 2003)—Clark Special Economic Zone in Pampanga—scheduled Feb. 28 to March 3.

Within the extensive 60-hectare Expo Pilipino, the PIFS 2003 will present global trends in home fashions. About 200 exhibitors will showcase export standard furniture and home accessories manufactured mostly in Pampanga. Top exporters from Manila and other regions who are known in the global market will show their best furniture pieces.

New site

The move to hold the Philippine International Furniture Show to the Expo Pilipino site provided participants exhibition space three times the size of previous venues. Being the biggest furniture show in the country, PIFS is committed to grow the show every year and feature more new products.

Pampanga has been the heart and soul of the Philippine furniture industry and is currently home to over 40 internationally recognized furniture exporters.

Eduardo Zuluaga, overall chair of the Philippine Int'l Furniture Show, lauds the benefits of having the 2003 boutique show in Clark Field.

Tourist destination

Free shuttle services connecting airport, hotels and fair grounds provide hassle-free short-distance transport. This emerging tourist destination also offers a different dimension in entertainment, recreation and even the celebrated cuisine of Pampanga.

"Our local and foreign guests will find a less stressful environment within which to conduct business. We are all anticipating a successful turnout. We're inviting Metro Manilans and residents of surrounding provinces to come and be updated with the latest trends in furniture, home accessories and materials and products," says Zuluaga.

Special feature

A special feature of this year's furniture show is the presentation of 20 Lifestyle Villa showrooms. Using the 2-bedroom villas of Holiday Inn (located five minutes to Expo Pilipino) top professional interior designers created different design executions ranging from classic, eclectic, contemporary, ethnic and avant garde.

The organizer of PIFS 2003 was confident that the refreshing new dimensions added to this years' exciting program will create a positive ripple of confidence in the industry.

Feng shui-friendly residential complex rises on Ayala avenue

By Charles E. Buban

ANGELA de Villa Lacson, third from left, shows the finer points of the project to Ayala Land executives Jaime Ysmael, Marivic Añonuevo and Mercedita Noledo.

PHOTOS BY ROMY HOMILLADA

A FENG shui master says the three buildings resemble Chinese mountains, a good luck sign for the occupants.

LAST Wednesday must be an auspicious day to formally launch a property that will soon rise at the corner of Ayala and Buendia.

The Columns, Ayala Avenue launch happened just a few days before the onset of the Year of the Goat, which according to Chinese tradition signifies love of beauty, peaceful oneness with nature, and good fortune in matters of wealth.

Indeed, this is what the project intends to convey according to its developer, Community Innovation Inc., a division of Ayala Land.

"Our theme—Good Luck, Good Fortune, Good Location—says it all: to provide starting families and young and rising professionals superior living standard with the facilities and amenities for healthful and quality living," according to Angela de Villa Lacson, president of CII.

For good luck

The company even brought in feng shui master Joseph Chau in the early phase of the project to make sure The Columns, Ayala Avenue conforms with feng shui.

Feng shui, which means "Wind and Water," is an ancient art of placement addressing the relationship between human beings and their environments and offers keen insights and practical methods that sustain harmonious balance in places where people live and work.

He said the location of the property will attract *chi*, or energy, from heaven and the earth since its alignment on the geomancer's compass gives it a force of permanence.

Also according to the geomancer, the trio of buildings, which accentuates The Columns, Ayala Avenue resemble Chinese mountains, which signifies promotion and that people who will stay in the buildings will have good luck, with significant chance for promotion.

Dream come true

Yet even without considering its feng shui-friendly features, The Columns, Ayala Avenue is a dream come true for its future residents who can now live a stone's throw away from their workplace, shopping and recreational destinations at reasonable prices.

The Columns, Ayala Avenue is the company's first mid-range residential product. With units ranging from P2 million to P6 million, the property is indeed within reach of its intended market.

"They are also excellent investment opportunities with room for future growth," said Lacson.

It will be managed by Ayala Property Management Corp., ensuring topnotch service.

Trio of buildings

The Columns, Ayala Avenue is a trio of 30-story buildings—23-story residential towers standing upon a 7-story podium—with parking, lobbies, dining and retail spaces.

The three towers are angled to provide generous natural light, while deep notches allow a refreshing breeze to flow through the rooms.

"Terra-cotta styling lines each window, bay and balcony, the ground floor, three grand lobbies unite Asian inspiration with modern sophistication," describes Lacson of the project.

Inside the spacious units, ceramic tile floors match with high-quality fixtures for the kitchen and bath.

Every room in each unit will have its own window, with the main windows proffering expansive views. Gardens surround the ground floor, with outdoor cafés and restaurants and pools leading up to the grand lobbies.

The podium level will host upscale shops and restaurants on its ground floor, which is open to the public. Upstairs, the private residential units will be accessible only to its occupants and visitors as they will be secured by a 24-hour security personnel and system.

Recreation deck

On the seventh floor, atop the podium, sits the recreation deck, a hanging garden above the surrounding city.

A lagoon-style pool, large enough for laps and relaxing enough for naps, sits amid green gardens and seating areas.

THE UNIT'S longer space offers a chance for entertaining more guests.

An exercise path spans the length of the deck from the pool to a large party area connected to interior function rooms.

Adjoining the recreation deck is a business center, meeting rooms, function rooms, and conversation areas next to a gym, a game room (with mini theater) and even a daycare center for the residents' children.

At sunset, residents on all three sides will be treated to dramatic views of the distant mountains, the Makati skyline and the sky above Manila Bay.

Quality living

Put together, the CII approach to quality living is spelled out in The Podium, Ayala Avenue.

"The company carves a record of firsts within its first year of public introduction in providing homes for upwardly mobile professionals and growing families," said Lacson.

She added the company has successfully innovated by catering to the worthwhile dreams of young urban achievers while drawing from the Ayala Land heritage of community building and good investments.

Worldbex 2003 biggest RP construction trade show

WHAT'S in store for the Philippine construction industry in 2003?

The answers and expectations await the industry decision-makers and the public in Worldbex 2003, the 8th Philippine World Building and Construction Exposition set on March 19 to 23 at the World Trade Center and Philippine Trade Training Center in Pasay City.

Organized by Worldbex Services International (WSI), Worldbex 2003 is the 8th presentation of the Philippines' largest and ultimate building and construction trade show with the most comprehensive gathering of innovative, functional and dynamic building and construction products and services worldwide.

With the theme "Leading Global Construction Beyond Innovation," this five-day trade show will feature the latest and leading products and services in the building and construction industry, which will be showcased in more than 8,000 square meters of exhibition space of WTC and over 2,000 square meters expanse of the PTTC.

This year's trade show will also feature real estate and housing, safety and security, landscape and interiors, national and grand embassy pavilions. Over 500 exhibitors from 20 participating countries are expected to showcase their products from all around the globe to be witnessed by an expected 40,000 attendees.

Joseph L. Ang, founding chair, is confident that 2003 will draw another huge success as it had in the past as the event continues to open doors for the convergence of cutting-edge construction products, services and technology from various countries.

The major exhibitors of Worldbex 2003 consist of major players in building materials, equipment and services, interior design and renovation, mechanical and electrical engineering systems, security and fire equipment, construction promotion, government and private institutions, information technology and telecommunications for construction.

WSI has secured the support of 23 industry associations, the US Commercial Service and the European Chamber of Commerce of the Philippines for the said trade show.

CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION

LRA unveils land registration, info system

By Vicente B. Foz
Contributor

THE LAND Registration Authority (LRA) has unveiled the crown in its modernization bid, the Philippine Land Registration and Information System (Philaris), a land title computerization project, "to eradicate forever fake titling and evolve its systems to cater to the demands of a vastly changing world."

The event coincides with LRA's observance of its founding anniversary with the slogan "100 Taong Paglilingkod ng LRA sa Sambayanang Pilipino." The LRA and its project partner, the Land Registration Systems Inc. and its associates, LG CNS Philippines and F. F. Cruz Inc. have already constructed the Project Information Management Center and the new registry of deeds of Quezon City, both located at the LRA compund on East Avenue, Quezon City.

Continued support

In a message, LRA Administrator Benedicto B. Ulep thanked President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo for her "continued support to the agency's program to streamline its work processes as well as its crusade against graft, in line with her call to the nation to eliminate bureaucratic red tape and corruption."

The project's specific goals are to carry out a fast and reliable process of registration of lands through nationwide integrated computerization; automate the titling processes and ensure the integrity of land titles, efficient service delivery, accurate land information, preservation of land records and new client-customer services and products.

The project will thus link all LRA levels with the central office, 16 regional registries of deeds and 162 registries of deeds. It will also provide other sectors access to historical data and other knowledge bases for land titling and registration in various information formats for decision-making. With Philaris in place, LRA said it "will firmly and finally close the doors to land-related crimes and open new doors of public confidence."

ULEP

The LRA deputy administrators are Edilberto R. Feliciano and Ofelia E. Abueg Sta. Maria.

Restoring confidence

In a statement, LRA said,"The rampant debasing of the country's land titling system makes it imperative for it to undertake the computerization project in order to restore confidence in the country's registry and titling systems and raise its level of service to the public."

By functioning as central repository of records on original registration of lands under the Torrens system, including subdivision and consolidation of plans, the LRA said, "it plays a major role in the conversion and preservation of our patrimony."

Thus, it said, LRA "protects the vital national resource that is land from malicious individuals and criminal syndicates who, in their despicable desire to earn quick money at the expense of the legitimate landowners and the unsuspecting public, greatly undermine the integrity and trustworthiness of land registration in our country."

LRA said it has steadfastly fought against fake land titling and has lobbied for amending the laws so such serious offenses be deemed heinous crime.

Commendation

Recognizing deserving agency officials and personnel, Administrator Ulep commended them for their "honesty, industry and competence, loyalty and dedication to their duty to protect and uphold the rights of the people over their properties through their continuing efforts to ensure a clean, efficient and trustworthy record of land registration."

Ulep said, "Let this also serve as a reminder to those who fail to measure up to their required degree of honesty and industry that I shall unrelentingly pursue appropriate actions necessary to instill discipline in order to improve the image and integrity of the Authority."

Recently, on a complaint of a landowner, Ulep ordered the investigation of Caloocan City registrar of deeds Regulo Coloma for issuing dubious Maysilo Estate titles in violation of standing Department of Justice and LRA policy against issuance of new titles that result in double titling of previously titled properties.

Coloma's predecessor, then registrar of deeds Yolanda Alfonso, along with former deputy registrar Norberto Vasquez, had earlier been dismissed from government service for "acting maliciously, fraudulently and in bad faith" by certifying that Original Certificate of Title 994 of the old Maysilo Estate was issued on April 19, 1917 when they knew that the correct date of registration was May 3, 1917. Their act, LRA, Department of Justice and Senate investigations showed, led to issuance of titles overlapping lands previously issued to others several decades ago.

By applying business process reengineering, change management and automated workflow, Internet access, digital mapping, CD ROM and optical disk-based archiving and validating systems, and full network connectivity, LRA said, Philaris aims to:

- Secure tighter control over land titles and eliminate fraudulent titles by shifting from a paper-based operation to a paperless system.
- Facilitate the apprehension and prosecution of persons possessing or dealing in spurious land titles by developing a system of identifying and tracking titles between the LRA central office and the registries of deeds that will verify authenticity of claims, titles, records and documents anytime, from anywhere.
- Eliminate fraudulent and inaccurate surveys by using modern digital mapping technologies to create accurate municipal index sheets and update them with parcel boundaries and ownership information.
- Make available to the public an Internet access to all land titling information from the LRA central office and all registry offices.
- Protect land information from loss due to fire, theft, natural disasters and the normal ravages of time by using secured document imaging technology.
- Expedite land titling procedures through a nationwide networking of all registries and the LRA central office, and by storing land title-related documents as digital images in a commonly accessible, searchable database.

Consortium

The Land Registration System's Inc. (Lares) is the project company formed by the consortium awarded the contract for the computerization system under a Build-Own-Operate arrangement under Republic Act 1778 and its rules and regulations. The project is being implemented at no cost to the government, being wholly funded by the private proponents without any governmental guaranty.

Lares is composed of Strategic Alliance Development Corp. (Stradec), Unisys, Comfact Corp. and F.F. Cruz & Co. Inc. LG CNS Philippines is the project's systems integrator and project manager. It ensures the full integration and seamless interfacing of all technical components of the project with each other, and ensures that the project is delivered on time within budget. F.F. Cruz undertakes data conversion, site preparation and facilities development, and the Geographic Information System that uses the digital map as a base map for providing land information.

FORUM ON THE PHILIPPINE ECONOMY
JANUARY 14, 2003
HON. ROMULO L. NERI
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FORUM ON RP ECONOMY
Neda director general Romulo Neri updated SHDA members on the status of the Philippine economy during the SHDA Forum held recently at Shangri-La Hotel Makati. Addressing the forum is SHDA national president Jesus B. Atencio. Seated from left are SHDA board secretary Roy D. Calleja, FVP Marilu M. Alferes, Prof. Tomas B. Lopez of the Asian Institute of Management and Neri (not shown).

Premier tourism, recreation park to rise in Subic

By Allan Macatuno
PDI Central Luzon Desk

SUBIC BAY FREEPORT—Here's another reason for businessmen, families and tourists to break away from the hustle and bustle in Metro Manila.

One of the upcoming tourist attractions inside the Subic Bay Freeport, which will feature a "family-oriented center" and "sports mecca," is now being developed to lure more local and foreign visitors and investors.

Eco-tourism attractions

Aside from the frequently visited eco-tourism attractions like the bat kingdom, butterfly garden, jungle environment survival training camp, Ocean Adventure and Forest Adventure Park, the P2-billion Subic Coastal Development Project will soon give pride not only to Subic but also to the country.

The Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority has approved the project that is envisioned to change the landscape of the coastal area along the freeport's central business district.

Recreation community

With Palafox Associates, the country's leader in architectural urban planning and consultancy services, as its master planner, the The SCDP is expected to create a recreation community in a 20-hectare idle land.

SBMA Chair Felicito Payumo said the project would help boost the freeport's tourism business potentials to create more employment and generate additional income for the government.

"The tourism industry is indeed the spirit of the freeport having a unique natural attraction compared to the other economic zones. It is not just an industrial estate but a total community for everyone to enjoy," says Payumo.

Water theme park

SCDP president Marianito Fernandez says the major part of the project, the Moon Bay Marina, will feature a water theme park, a two-hectare area complete with all kinds of water-related activities.

The theme park will have a lazy river, a multilevel wave pool, water slides and boat rides to provide activities for children and adults.

The project, Fernandez said, would also provide a first-class but affordable residential and commercial complex connected to fast-food outlets and fine-dining restaurants along the Bay Walk area.

"Locators from notable hotel and restaurants have already expressed verbal commitment to put up their businesses in at least 1,000 square meters of the commercial area," Fernandez said.

Adding attraction to the area are popular restaurants such as Gerry's Grill, Fishcado, Pista sa Barrio, Scuba Shack, Sea Front Restaurant and the Board Walk Inn.

Sports events

Aside from the Scuba Shack, which offers jet ski and scuba rentals for enthusiasts, the beachfront is also a regular venue for sports events like beach volleyball tournaments, international triathlon, national jet ski competitions, scuba diving, parasailing, and lately, wind surfing.

"All kinds of aqua sports will be available here, including fishing and boating. Boats will be rented out for leisure," Fernandez said, noting that the beachfront has become "a relaxation area for all ages."

Site dev't concept

The initial phase of its development program includes the construction of the Bay Walk, a water park, an apartelle-type hotel, a warehouse club for wholesale and retails products and a landscaping work that will make the area more attractive for visitors.

The site development concept was a collaboration of ideas, gathered from frequent visitors of the place, which were transformed by Palafox and Fernandez into an eye-catching site.

Fernandez said the project will also offer investment opportunities as the SCDC would offer membership and share holdings for interested individuals or corporate accounts.

Among the amenities for club members to enjoy are free accommodation for 14 days in single, two- or three-bedroom villas and cottages, use of water theme park, fun park, clubhouse, business center, health and beauty spa, gymnasium, swimming pool, bowling lanes, shooting range and cockpit arena.

Members can also avail of special discounted price in coffee shops, lounges, karaoke bars, aqua sports, scuba diving, parasailing, amusement arcade, cinemas, restaurants and bars and duty-free shops.

Fernandez said part of the project is a world-class "Movie Memorabilia" museum that would display items that have been used in films shot in Subic.

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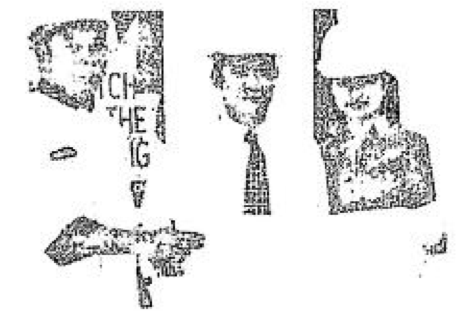


SITE INSPECTION
The construction of the new branch of Italianni's Restaurant in SM Bicutan is now in full swing in time for its opening this month. Shown during a site inspection is its management team composed of assistant kitchen manager Eduardo Diego, GM Joel Moquite and Rechele Tiongson. The new restaurant, which can sear 100 guestsm will carry the same excellent menu of Italian-American specialties plus pocket-friendly selections of combination dishes.

Makati condo unit P15,888 per month

ORIENTAL Gardens in Makati has something for young executives who want to own prime residence in Makati City but couldn't afford the monthly amortization.

With a minimum of P100,000 reservation fee and 10 percent partial down payment, extended terms financing for the additional down payment of 25 percent is available at no interest for up to 36 months. With this new scheme, a 33-square-meter studio can now be amortized for as low as P15,888 per month.

Bank financing for the balance, is also available at low-interest rates through Metrobank or PSBank Home Loans and other deferred payment financing schemes of Federal Land.

Ideal location

Federal Land Inc assistant vice president Cheryl Ann Arnold said that with its ideal location in Makati (on the new, upgraded Chino Roces Avenue) near Buendia, "this 30-story luxury condominium caters to the discriminating tastes of the young upcoming career executive as it promises a trendy lifestyle that's within walking distance to the banking and business districts, shopping centers, shocols, supermarkets, dining and recreational jaunts of the Makati's CBDs."

The development, she said, will feature floor-to-ceiling-wide windows that offer a panoramic view of Makati's skyline, with a choice of studio (spacious 33 or 35 sq. m), 1 bedroom (45 sq. m) and 2 bedroom (80 sq. m) units.

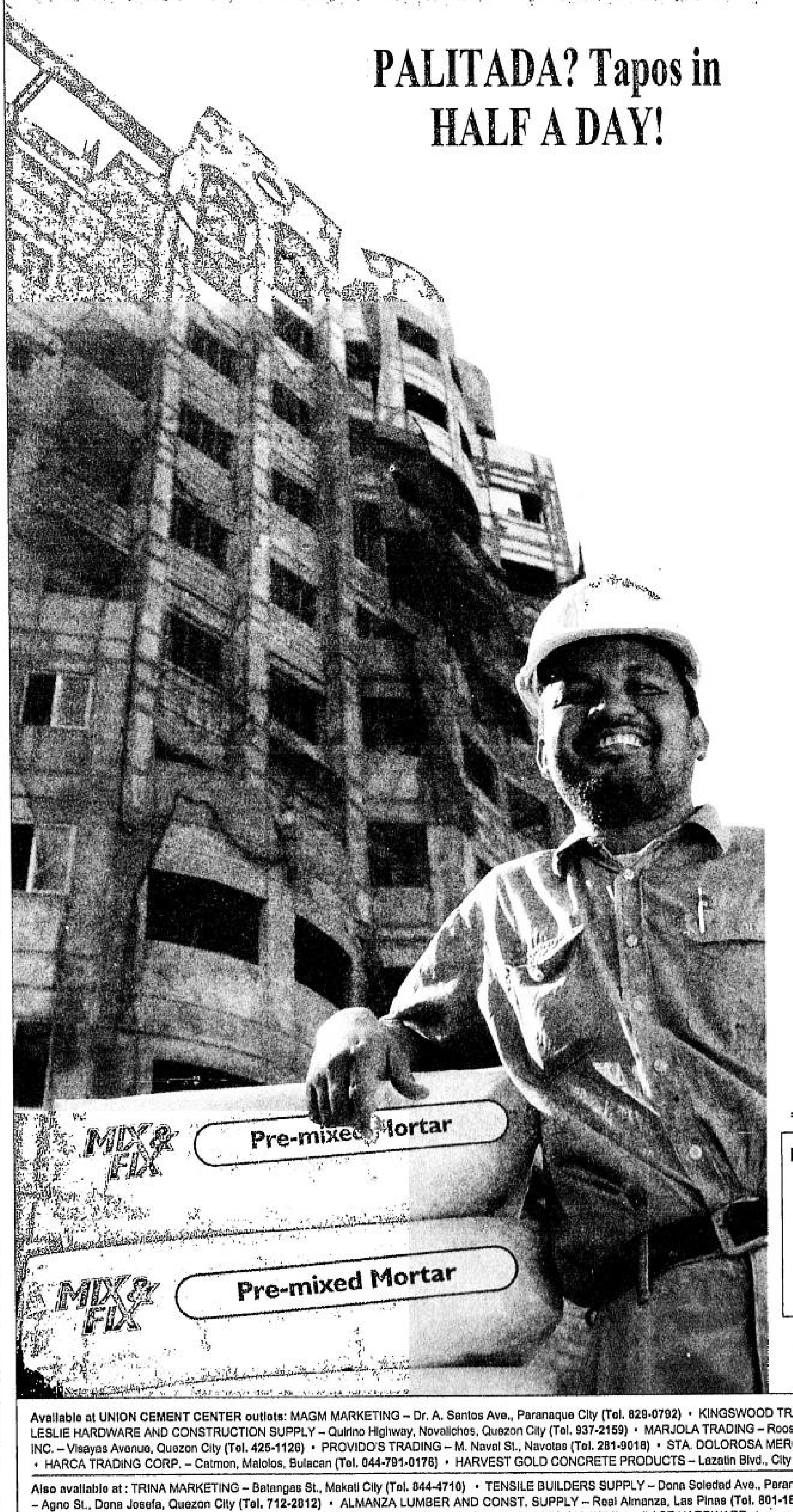
Owned by Federal Land Inc., a member of Metrobank group of companies, Oriental Gardens' offer is good until Feb. 16, 2003 only. Federal Land projects include Valencia Hills near Greenhills, Bay Gardens on Roxas Boulevard and Makati's newest landmark-GT Towers.

Japan housing fair open to RP traders

THE PAG-IBIG Fund Overseas Program (POP) in cooperation with the Quadrillion Group of Companies invite real estate developers or marketing companies to participate in the 2003 Japan Housing Fair on Feb. 15 (Osaka) and Feb. 16 (Tokyo).

The Japan Housing Fair, which will showcase an array of quality real estate products from select developers in the Philippines, is a venue for developers to tap the overseas Filipino workers (OFWs) market in Japan. There are about 120,000 OFWs in Japan to this date.

The event organizer aims to provide OFWs the opportunity to acquire homes in the country by way of membership to a provident savings program. POP has tapped the Quadrillion Group as its marketing arm in Japan to disseminate information about its program.



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Bush's budget proposes tax cuts

WASHINGTON—President George W. Bush will send Congress a $2.23 trillion spending plan featuring new tax cuts to boost the economy, a conservative tilt to major social programs and record deficits for the next two years—shortfalls that Democrats blame on Bush's tax cuts.

White House budget officials said Sunday the president's tax and spending blueprint, complete with dozens of agency briefings, will roll out as scheduled despite Saturday's space shuttle disaster.

Bush's budget outline for the 2004 fiscal year, which begins Oct. 1, is required by law to be sent to Congress the first Monday in February. The numbers and spending priorities undoubtedly will change somewhat over the next several months as Congress acts on his request.

The Columbia tragedy certainly will prompt added scrutiny to the president's spending proposal for NASA, which has come under heavy criticism from Congress in recent years because of cost overruns for the orbiting space station and other programs.

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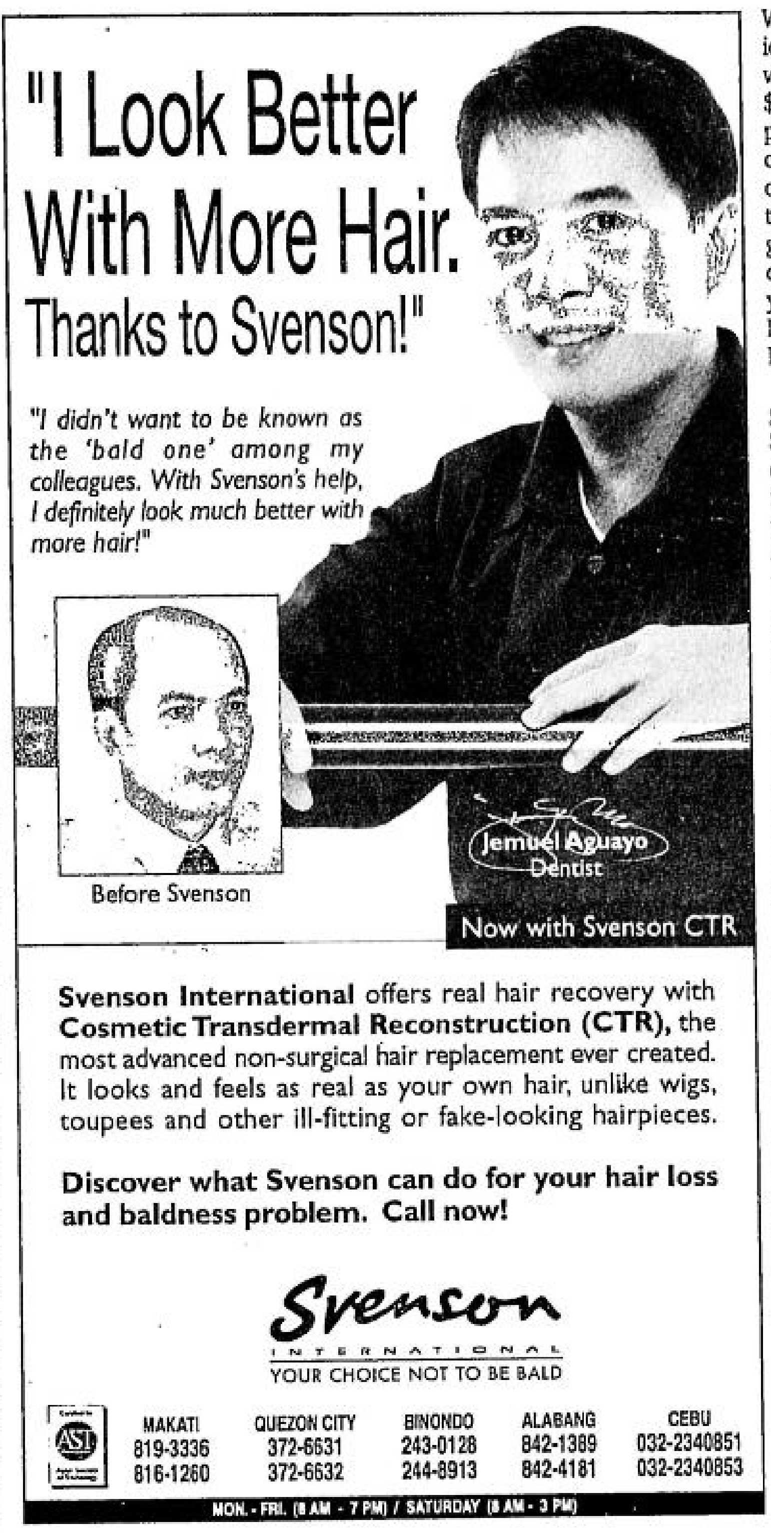
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Is it safe for a woman to exercise during her monthly period?

WELL AND GOOD

Tina Juan

ONE of the most common questions I get from women is if they can exercise during their menstrual period. It's not surprising that they should constantly ask this, considering the many myths and misconceptions surrounding menstruation.

In some ancient cultures, a menstruating woman was considered "unclean," was not allowed to touch certain things, temporarily separated from the rest of the tribe, and had to undergo ceremonial cleansing before she could return.

Many of these practices had to do with taboos associated with blood and, who knows, maybe women in ancient times actually perpetuated the mysteries surrounding menstruation so they could get some R & R for a few days a month from their gruelling and tedious daily routines.

In the last couple of decades, more women have become involved in exercise and sports. This has allowed scientists to make logical observations about the effects of working out during menstruation.

According to the American College of Obstetrics and Gynecology, for the majority of women, there is no reason why menstruation should interfere with their daily activities, including exercise. In fact, regular exercise is recommended as one of the ways to alleviate the pain and discomfort that some women experience before and during menstruation.

How exercise can ease dysmenorrhea

Dysmenorrhea is a term that not too many men are familiar with, but most women know that this medical term means menstrual pain and cramping, because they experience it to some degree every month.

Dysmenorrhea is thought to be caused by prostaglandins, a natural chemical that stimulates the uterus to contract to expel blood. Prostaglandins make blood vessels constrict, slowing down blood flow to the uterus. Insufficient blood flow can cause pain in the same way that not enough blood to the heart causes chest pain.

Exercise is thought to ease dysmenorrhea for two reasons. One, aerobic exercise releases endorphins, natural painkillers produced by the body, which can help dull menstrual pain. Two, exercise may alter prostaglandin production.

Exercise can also help even out mood swings, anxiety and depression that occur in some women. It can aid in reducing bloating because sweating releases body water.

Women athletes and menstruation

There have been several studies associating a higher risk of injury for female athletes with specific times of the menstrual cycle. However, there is no definite proof because the studies are conflicting.

For example, a 1989 Swedish study found that female soccer players incurred more injuries during the pre-menstrual and menstrual period while a 1998 US study found that ligament injuries were more frequent during the ovulatory (middle part of the cycle) phase.

In another example of contradictory results, this time with regard to performance, one study found that swimmers performed at their poorest just before menstruation and swam fastest during their period, while another study found that cross-country skiers did their best just after menstruation and during ovulation.

Until more research confirms the theory that injury rates and performance are affected by the different phases of the menstrual cycle, it would be better for coaches to focus on finding what works best for the individual athlete since women have widely varying physical responses to training or competing in the days prior to and during menstruation. It's also good for coaches and athletes alike to keep in mind that Olympic medals have been won during all phases of a woman's monthly cycle.

More glycogen may be stored

There has been some research suggesting that the glycogen levels in a woman's body are increased between the 20th and 25th day of the menstrual cycle. Glycogen is the stored form of glucose or blood sugar and is an important source of fuel during athletic performances.

Some female athletes have tried to manipulate this information to gain more endurance by taking progesterone pills to prolong this phase of the cycle. Experts warn that this is not a good idea because of potentially dangerous side effects.

> If exercise makes you feel worse, reduce the intensity and duration

Burning more fat

An Australian research team found that a woman's body responds differently to exercise depending on what part of her menstrual cycle she is in, according to a report by Reuters. A group of healthy young women with normal monthly periods were instructed to exercise the week after menstruation (the first half of the cycle) and the week after ovulation (the second half).

Although the women did the same type and intensity of exercise, they felt the workouts were harder during the first half of their cycle compared to the second half. However, they burned more fat when they felt the exercise was easier to perform.

Estrogen and progesterone levels are high during the second half of the cycle, and this may have something do with why the women burned more fat. If the theory proves to be true, it could partly explain why menopausal women (who experience a significant drop in estrogen levels) have a hard time maintaining their weight.

The head researcher, Leanne Redman, told Reuters that a future application of this research is to find the exact dosage of estrogen that would help a menopausal woman burn fat more easily.

Scuba diving

In an article written by Kristy Allison, a PADI Master Diver Trainer, a scientific review of 956 female divers found that 38 percent of them were menstruating when they experienced a decompression illness accident. The review also found that 85 percent of those taking oral contraceptives were menstruating at the time of their mishap.

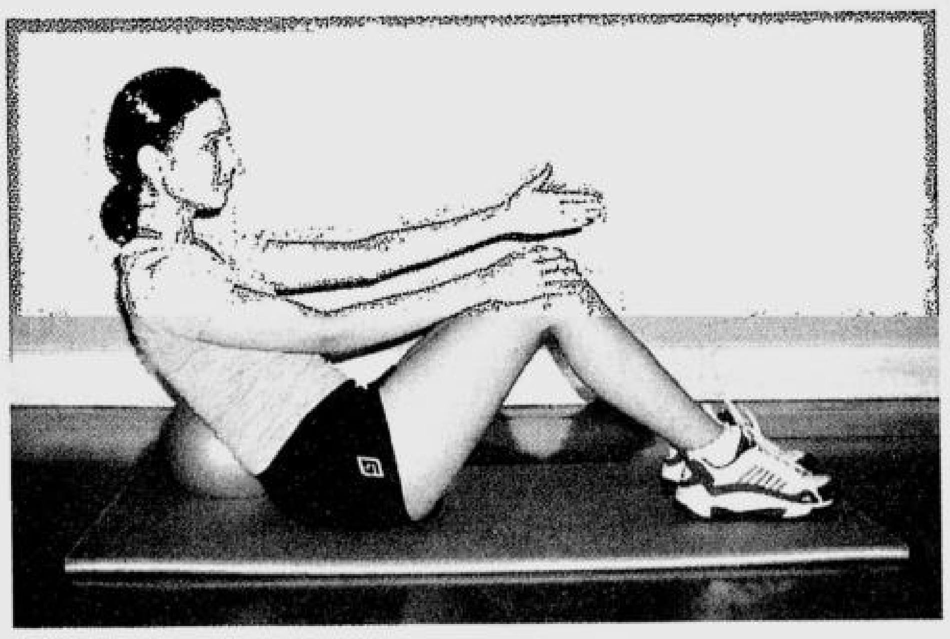
Allison writes that this finding suggests, but does not prove, that women taking "the pill" can be at a higher risk for decompression illness during their monthly period. Even though there is no definite proof yet, Allison cautions that women divers who take birth control pills should be prudent when diving during menstruation by making fewer dives, shorter and shallower dives and making longer safety stops.

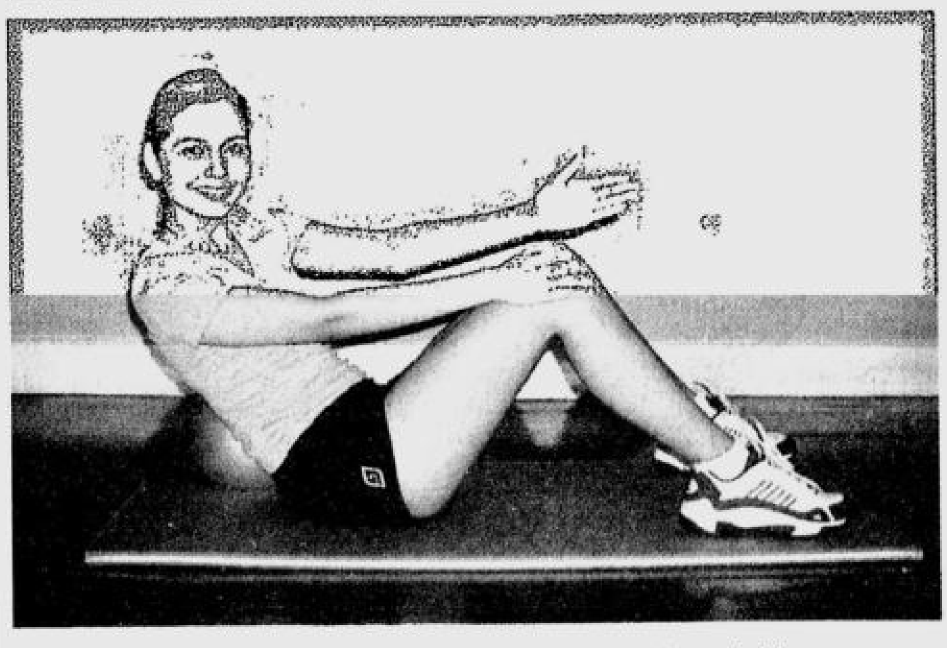
Other menstrual-specific questions that female divers ask are regarding tampon use and increased risk of shark attack. Allison and other diving instructors say that the use of tampons is not affected by increased pressure and menstrual bleeding will not increase the risk of being attacked by a shark because bleeding

IS IT SAFE/ C3

EXERCISE OF THE WEEK

Oblique crunch with ball lumbar support





STRENGTHENS the obliques, muscles that criss-cross your waist.

Equipment

Exercise mat and rubber or plastic ball. Another option is to use a medicine ball.

Exercise technique

1. Sit down with your knees bent. Place the ball on the right side of your lower back. Lean backwards against the ball and place your left hand on your left knee for support. Hold your right arm in front of you at shoulder level with the palm facing in.
2. Contract your abdominal muscles as you reach across diagonally with your right arm towards your left knee.
3. Return to starting position.
4. Do the desired number of repetitions, then change sides.

Performance tips

1. Exhale as you curl diagonally; inhale as you return to starting position.
2. Visualize your oblique muscles going across your abdomen and waist in a criss-cross pattern. Focus on moving the bottom of your right ribcage towards the top of your left hipbone.
3. Keep your hips and knees steady as you curl diagonally at the waist.

Repetitions:

Do five to 10 repetitions per side.

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I lost my MEDICard membership card, but I have applied for a new one through our company's HR Department. In the meantime, while my card is in process, can I avail of MEDICard's services?

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Meet your MEDICard Team

At the HUMANA Medical Clinic, MEDICard members may seek the services of specialist **Dr. Alan Gerard Austriaco.** Dr. Austriaco is an Ophthalmologist, a doctor specializing in the treatment of illnesses of the eye. He finished his degree in Medicine and his residency training for his specialization at UERM-MMC. He is also an International member of the American Academy of Ophthalmology. Members may visit him for consultations at the HUMANA Medical Clinic, King's Court Bldg. II, Don Chino Roces Ave., Makati City every Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays from 5 to 7 PM, Tuesdays and Thursdays, 9 AM to 1 PM and during Saturdays from 9 to 11 in the morning.

MEDICard members may seek the services of specialist, **Dr. Wendell Yu Limquiaco.** Dr. Limquiaco specializes in General Surgery. He is frequently referred to by patients and colleagues as Doc Wendell. He finished Medicine at the Cebu Doctors Hospital and took his residency training for his specialization at the Chong Hua Hospital. Doc Wendell is a Diplomate of the Philippine Board of Surgery and a proud member of the Cebu Medical Society. For consultations, members may visit him at his clinic Suite 302, Medical Arts Bldg., Chong Hua Hospital. Don Mariano Cui St., Cebu City. Clinic hours are from Mondays to Fridays, 9 to 11 AM and again from 2 to 5 PM. You may also visit him during Saturdays, from 9 AM to 12 noon.

We encourage all MEDICard members to voice out their concerns and issues at hand. BE HEARD AND BE READ. You can write DR. NICKY S. MONTOYA at 9/F Sagittarius Bldg. H.V. De la Costa St., Salcedo Village, Makati City or e-mail him at inquiry@medicardphils.com. For feedback on availment of our services, e-mail us at feedback@medicardphils.com.

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A hospital's centennial

Text by Alex C. Paita
Photos by Val Handumon

IT IS rare to find doctors in a festive mood—laughing hard and holding wine glasses in place of stethoscopes and syringes.

But that was exactly the sight when the commemorative centennial stamp of St. Luke's Medical Center was launched at the Garden Ballroom of Edsa Shangri-La.

Key officials and physicians of St. Luke's hung loose during their first quarterly doctors' socials, which kicked off the year-long celebration of the medical center's 100th anniversary.

"We're proud to say that from a small clinic in Binondo, St. Luke's has become the No. 1 medical center in the country today," said Robert Kuan, chair of the center's board of trustees.

Felipe Hidalgo Jr., assistant postmaster general of the Philippine Postal Corp., turned over souvenir frames to St. Luke's executives such as Kuan, Joe Ledesma, president and CEO; Dr. Arsenio Santos, medical director and SVP for medical affairs; and Edith Simeon, SVP for finance.

St. Luke's Medical Center started as a medical clinic under the American Episcopal Church.

Then in 1975, the church turned St. Luke's into a non-stock, nonprofit institution for it to stand on its own, businesswise.

"This year, we'll start the construction of the second St. Luke's Medical Center in Fort Bonifacio Global City," Kuan said. "It will be a 600-bed hospital, and the project will be finished, hopefully, by August 2006."

The St. Luke's commemorative centennial stamp bears the image of the medical center, and is now available to the public in P5 denominations at the Philippine Postal Corp.

Other centennial items are available at the corporate-affairs division at the medical center in Quezon City.

E-mail the author at ithink@deliveryman.com

ROBERT Kuan (at right), chair of the St. Luke's board of trustees, receives the commemorative centennial stamp from Felipe Hidalgo of the Philippine Postal Corp.

PDI PHOTO / VAL HANDUMON

St. Luke's doctors toast the medical center's 100th foundation anniversary

Heart of the matter

By Gia Damaso-Dumo
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

Filipino-American physicians sow seeds of education through medical missions

SAN FERNANDO CITY—Medical missions have often been associated with one-shot deals. But this one goes many steps further.

The Medical Mission Foundation Inc., a non-profit organization founded by a Filipino-American doctor and composed mostly of Filipino-American medical professionals based in Michigan, does not only provide free services and supplies to indigent Filipinos, as it did in La Union recently. It also tries to leave a lasting impact wherever it goes by sowing the seeds of education, global partnership and research toward its admittedly "utopian" dream of a "globalized health care."

"Health care [should be] a globalized concept. Advanced countries have the obligation to share their expertise, resources and research information with all professionals in developing countries. Health care is a basic human right which should transcend race and borders," said Dr. Fanny de la Cruz, MMFI founder.

De la Cruz, a plastic surgeon at West Bloomfield Plastic Surgery Center, established the organization three years ago.

Recently, a team of 60 doctors and medical personnel from the MMFI performed free surgery on 167 poor patients from La Union. The medical mission was conducted at the Ilocos Training and Regional Medical Center in San Fernando City and at the La Union Medical Center in Agoo town.

The group also donated medical supplies, quality drugs and medical equipment worth about $250,000 to the ITRMC, according to De la Cruz.

Learning experience

In terms of education, De la Cruz said this medical mission has been a two-way learning experience.

"I have always believed in the inherent genius of Filipino professionals. We relearned from them how to do things without electronic technology, which we have always relied on in the US. Here, it is really clinical acumen and observation at work. And this is the core of medical diagnosis," she said.

But the MMFI's most important contribution is the propagation of the Emergency Medical Services (EMS) system through a collaboration with the Department of Emergency Medicine (DEM) of the University of the Philippines-Philippine General Hospital in Manila.

The EMS, which is basically pre-hospital care, is relatively new in the country, and the DEM itself only started accepting residents in 1997, according to Daisy Diaz, a registered nurse and the mission committee's vice chair.

The EMS includes cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR), use of automatic external defibrillators (AEDs) and other life-support techniques.

As a way of introducing EMS to the community, Dr. Farida Suplido of UP-PGH gave a basic life-support (BLS) course to policemen, firemen, barangay leaders and hospital personnel at the La Union Medical Center during the mission.

But Diaz said the BLS, where the next level is an advanced course for paramedics, is just part of the system which requires the full support and coordination of the provincial and local governments, the police and firefighters, community leaders and health workers at all levels.

"It requires ordinances to implement and regulations to check and balance. There should be a communication system in place, like [the police hotline] 911, so people will have access to emergency services anytime, and a traffic-control system so patients can get to the nearest capable facility in the shortest possible time," Diaz said.

She added that her group shared the so-called "Michigan EMS model" with UP-PGH in January last year, when they conducted their first Philippine medical mission at Smokey Mountain in Tondo, Manila.

UP-PGH has since become the organization's "center" for EMS development in the country.

Goiter cases

During the mission, 23 goiter patients treated in both La Union hospitals piqued the interest of Dr. Stephen Farrow, a surgeon from Detroit, who is doing further research on the subject.

Learning that most of the towns of La Union are located near the coast where seafood and marine products are the staple food, Farrow said that he was naturally "surprised."

However, he would investigate other causes of the phenomenon, such as "genetic or environmental factors," in a collaborative research among Wayne State University and Beaumont Hospital, both in Michigan, the MMFI and ITRMC.

"New technology would be used in the research including genetic [study] procedures. Through this collaboration, ITRMC residents may need to go to the US and this will be a great teaching opportunity [for us]," Farrow said.

Nurse Lourdes Lim, the mission committee chair, was grateful to the people who helped them help others.

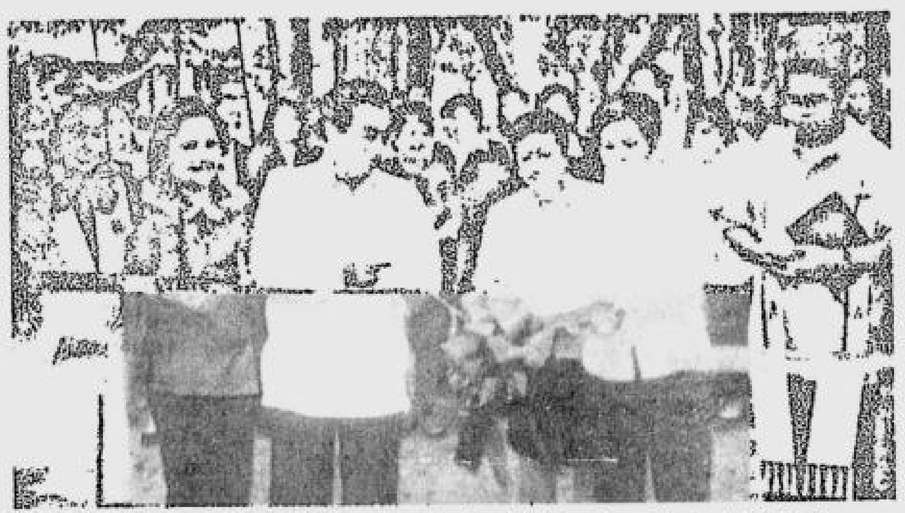
When the group needed to process their travel and work permits, the office of First Gentleman Jose Miguel Arroyo, through Dr. Mila Tolentino, promptly helped them. Local chief executives led by Gov. Victor Ortega, Vice Gov. Augusto Aureo Nisce and San Fernando City Mayor Mary Jane Ortega went out of their way to help, including the detailing of security escorts from the moment the group arrived in Manila until their departure, Lim said.

She's also grateful to LUMC chief Dr. Fernando Astom, ITRMC chief Dr. Gilbert de Leon, the operating-room nurses, the members of the community who took turns in hosting them during their stay, and many others who showed their hospitality.

Couturier Tony Galang held a benefit fashion show for the group in the US, and retired World Bank employee and Alaala Medical Mission founder Julia Cuevo donated two months' supply of vitamins to those who were treated, Lim said.

"This is not for show. We paid for our fare and our hotel, we used up our leaves [of absence], we raised funds and gathered supplies back home to come here. And we do this every year because we want to help the poor."

Kiddie corner of the sky


CATHY Babao-Guballa cuts the ribbon during the blessing of the h Migi's Corner, assisted by Manulife's VP for Human Resources Ces Jacinto and N ional Kidney and Transplant Institute's Dr. Enrique Ona.

KIDS try out the different Little Tykes playsets spread out in the sand-based play area.

THE BOYS eagerly look around, trying to decide what playset to try next.

SICK children eagerly rushed in, climbed the monkey bars, flew in the air on a swing and glided down miniature slides among the shade trees, as medical staff and guests cut the ribbon to launch Migi's Garden at the National Kidney and Transplant Institute (NKTI).

NKTI is the site of the second Migi's Garden, a 50-sq m lot surrounded by flowering bushes, designed to provide comfort and solace, however temporary, to 40-50 children out-patients who visit NKTI every Tuesday and Thursday.

The first Migi's Garden was inaugurated at charity wards 9 and 11 of the Philippine General Hospital.

The Migi's Garden at the NKTI is the sixth in the line of Migi's Corner projects sponsored by Canadian-based life insurance company Manulife Philippines.

Cathy Babao-Guballa, founder of Migi's Corner Foundation, is no stranger to a mother's grief. Cathy's 4-year-old son Migi died of tetralogy of fallot, a congenital heart defect, in 1999, after undergoing two open-heart surgeries at the Philippine Heart Center.

During her son's confinement, Cathy saw that the hospital had no playroom, and there were hardly any toys to cheer up the children.

In February 1999, when Migi would have turned five, the first Migi's Corner was put up at the Philippine Heart Center, where he had spent the last days of his life.

Donations of books, toys, a television set and personal computers, and cash from friends and strangers poured in, enabling Cathy to open a second corner at the Philippine Children's Medical Center.

In keeping with its global corporate giving program, Manulife has since teamed up with the Migi's Corner Foundation by setting up the play areas. Manulife vice president for marketing Jom Ignacio said Manulife Philippines would continue to support the Migi's Corner Foundation.

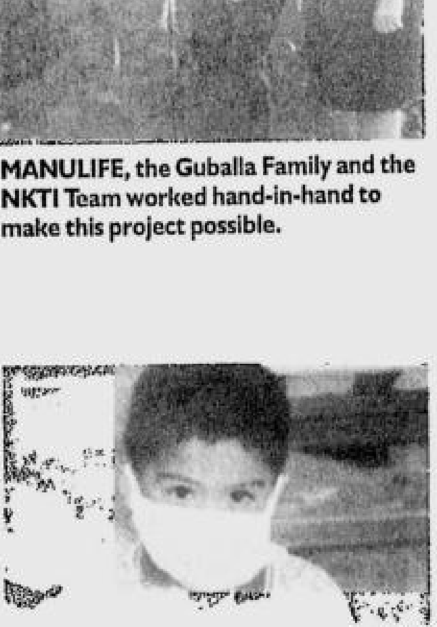
"We believe in the cause of Migi's Corner Foundation as it advocates the same principle as that of Manulife—to give care and protection to children, thereby ensuring brighter tomorrows," Jom said.

Hector Guballa, Cathy's husband, said they dream of having a shelter where parents who come from the provinces can stay while their children are confined in Metro Manila hospitals. They will call it Migi's House.

With five corners, a room, and two gardens, Cathy has come a long way in three years. Coping with the death of her child in the way she has is proof that productive and meaningful lives may be led even in grief.

MANULIFE, the Guballa Family and the NKTI Team worked hand-in-hand to make this project possible.

With the help of Manulife, a fun corner for sick children has been set up at the kidney institute


CHILDREN under medical care at the NKTI now have a play area where they can free their mind from their ailments, even just for a while.

Is it safe for a woman to exercise during her monthly period?

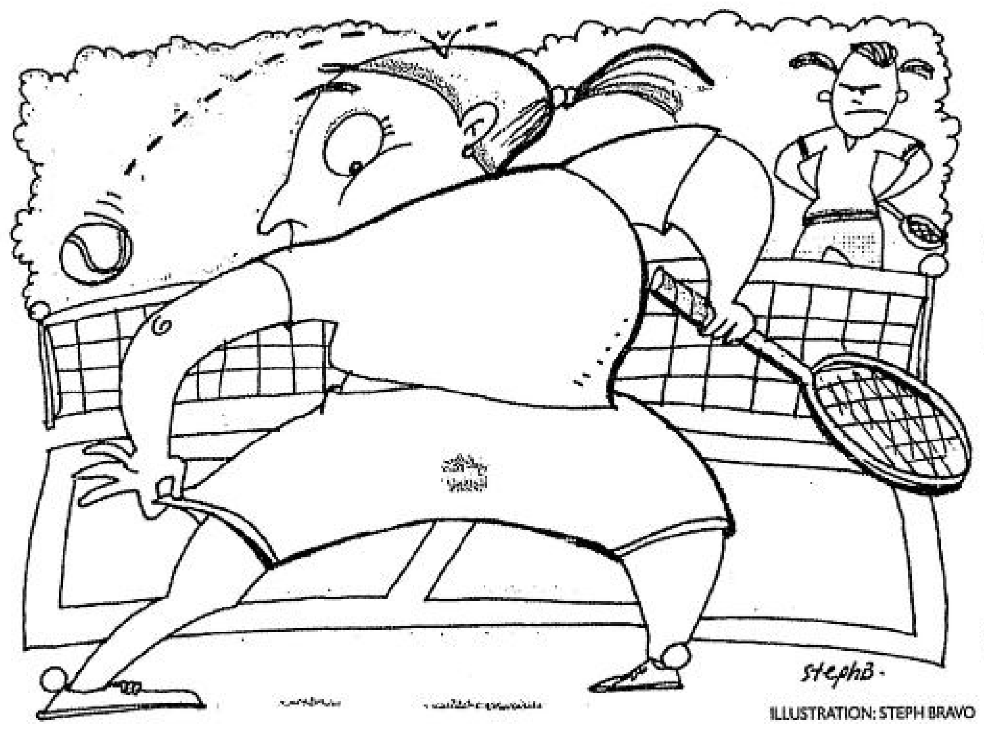


ILLUSTRATION: STEPH BRAVO

> Exercise helps alleviate the pain women experience before and during menstruation

From page C1

is too minimal and sharks are not attracted to menstrual blood. By the way, bears are not attracted to it either, as proven by experiments done by US national park facilities.

Divers, whether male or female, should only dive when they are feeling well. So, if a premenstrual or menstruating diver is feeling fatigued, dizzy or irritable, she will be a risk to herself and her diving buddy and it would be safer for her to sit out the dive.

Yoga during menstruation

Traditionally, inverted poses in yoga are contraindicated for menstruating women because it is believed that there is an outward flow of energy during the menstrual or "moon" cycle and inversions go against this flow.

According to Yoga Journal columnist and yoga teacher Barbara Benagh, some yoga instructors are concerned that inverted poses will cause endometriosis or vascular congestion in the uterus that could encourage excessive menstrual bleeding. Benagh points out that current scientific research has debunked the endometriosis theory and that vascular congestion will only be a problem for women who hold the inverted poses too long.

Benagh also observes that different yoga systems give conflicting advice on which poses to practice during menstruation. The bottom line, she says, is to observe your own body and see how you feel, not just for inverted poses but for all the *asanas* that you practice.

Diabetics and exercise

For reasons that are still not very clear but are suspected to have a link with estrogen and progesterone, female diabetics can have higher or lower than normal glucose levels in the days prior to and during menstruation.

Doctors suggest that a diabetic keep records of daily blood glucose levels for a few months and compare the non-menstruation days with the days before and during the monthly period.

If blood sugar levels are high at that time, exercise will be beneficial in removing the excess glucose. If blood sugar levels are lower than normal, exercise intensity would have to be modified to avoid hypoglycemia. In both cases, check with your doctor about increasing or decreasing food intake and insulin dosage.

Use common sense

On the whole, it is safe to exercise during menstruation. But the decision to do so lies strictly with you. If you feel that exercise makes you feel worse during menstruation, stop completely or reduce the intensity and duration. It's your body and no one can argue with you if you don't feel comfortable about exercising during your monthly period.

The Association of Fitness Professionals of the Philippines (AFPP) will hold a fitness seminar on Feb. 22 at the University of the Philippines, Diliman. Topics will be "Basic Gym Programming," "Capoeira," "Cardio Kung Fu," "Cardio Striptease" and "Stability Ball Training." Call 850-7647 or text (0917) 518-1202.

Watch "In Fitness & In Health" Mondays to Fridays on Studio 23 at 6-6:30 a.m. and on Net25, 6-6:30 p.m.

For questions and past articles and exercises, go to www.tinajuanfitness.com.

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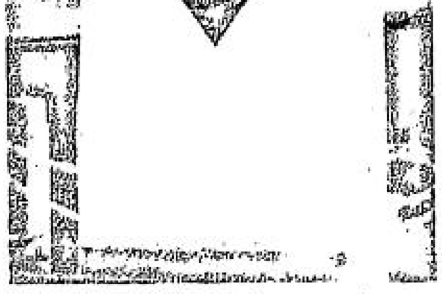

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'Love yourself' checklist

INSIDE OUT

Cory Quirino

IT'S high time you pay attention to the most important person—yourself.

Time and again, you have been told that, above all, you must to "thine own self be true." There are ways to connect with yourself which will heal, liberate and pamper you.

1. Mirror test. Strip yourself naked before a mirror. Take a good look. Greet your reflection with a smile and say, "Hi, sexy!"

2. Sit in a quiet corner of your house, office or any place you like. Practice silence for five minutes.

3. Create a sanctuary in your mind, your inner space, a place where you can go to when the world seems hostile.

4. Color your day. Each morning, when you wake up, sit by your bed and ask yourself, "What color do I feel like today? Am I white, pink or purple?"

It's amazing how the color of your choice will instinctively flash before you. More importantly, you will add more hues to your existing wardrobe.

5. Give in to a long-held fantasy. Change the color of your teeth to pearly white. Everyone's dream is to have a brighter smile.

For an expert make-over, call Perfect Smile, the dental laser whitening salon, at 892-9398 and 892-9941. The unique two-hour service will make you emerge a more confident you.

In your mind, create a sanctuary where you can go to when the world seems hostile

6. Undergo a total body-polishing treatment. Get rid of your unwanted facial and body hair. Through lite-sheer diode laser for a period of 4-5 sessions (one hour per session), you can brighten your complexion by just removing excess body hair.

7. Spider veins, fine red lines on your cheeks and ankles, can be removed through vascular laser. Painless and easy, you can have a smoother-looking face within minutes. Call Dra. Maricar Cruz at 637-3676.

8. Have a two-hour milk massage with aroma bath. Guaranteed to make you feel brand-new. Call Orient Day Spa at 813-4164.

9. Have an executive check-up and address your medical and health concerns as soon as possible.

Undergo lymphatic drainage treatment. This should detoxify your system and boost your immunity. Call Dr. Omar Arabia at 929-6090 and 929-6093.

10. Walk into a health food store and do a different kind of shopping.

11. Visit the organic vegetable market at Greenbelt and Alabang Town Center.

12. Change your look. Sometimes trying a new barber or hairdresser can give you a fresh image. Or putting color to your hair can do wonders.

Call Jesi Mendez at 812-0369 and 807-2194, or Amelia (Salon for Men and Women) at 844-1813.

13. Give someone your old pair of sunglasses. Then buy a new and more contemporary look. Better yet, get yourself a pair of titanium frames for its lighter weight and it can cause less creases on your face. In less than an hour you can have your new pair. Call Vision Express at 894-1305.

14. If you want peace of mind, distance yourself from people who cause you problems.

15. If the stress is too great to bear, go on a sabbatical. A trip alone can give you back the equilibrium you feel you are losing. Throw away, burn or tear up anything that reminds you of any past trauma or pain. And that means scrapbooks, photos, letters, gifts of any kind that can only drag you down.

16. Pamper yourself at home.

Honey mask

To soften the skin and give a gentle face lift or body lift.

2 tbsps honey (the liquid kind)

2 tsps lime or *dayap* juice (optional)

Dip your fingers into the bowl of honey. With soft circular motions use upward strokes from chin to forehead. Leave on your face for 15 minutes.

17. Jump until you are tired. Sometimes exhausting yourself through a jumping motion allows you to feel more alive than you have ever felt. It literally shakes the blues away.

18. Dance till you drop. Music and motion make great therapy.

19. When was the last time you felt the wind on your face? Go for a drive in the countryside.

20. Affirm and believe. "Love, I have love. I am love."

For as long as you never give up on love, love will never give up on you. So don't give up on yourself.

Love and light!

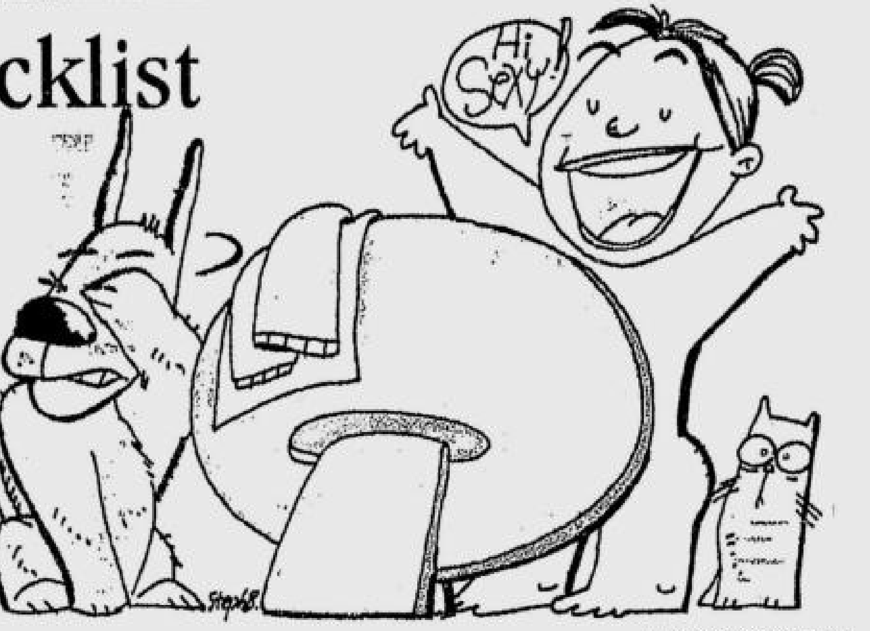


ILLUSTRATION: STEPH BRAVO

Keep your brain young through 'neurobics'

INNER AWARENESS

Jaime T. Licauco

WE'VE all heard of the old dictum: "Use it, or lose it," which usually refers to the way we learn new skills, like typing or skating. Doing something over and over again strengthens our bodies' "memory" for an activity until it becomes automatic.

This is true for our body, which contains muscles that can be trained to perform certain tasks. But our brain has no muscles. So how can it be trained to remain strong and pliable, even up to age 90?

Well, if the body has its aerobics, the brain now has its neurobics, a training program intended to enrich the connections between brain cells (called neurons) and thus keep it young and healthy.

The term "neurobics" was coined by Lawrence C. Katz, Ph.D., and Manning Rubin, authors of the book "Keep Your Brain Alive." Neurobics consists of doing ordinary activities in new or unexpected ways that can strengthen brain-cell performance even at an advanced age.

What are some examples of neurobics? "Rearranging the items on your desk, brushing your teeth with the opposite hand, or taking a new route to work." Doing any task that we don't habitually do will strengthen the brain's power.

If two groups, one older (70s) and the other younger (20s) were given the same overall memory test, who do you think will get a higher score?

If you placed your bet on the 20-year-olds, you would have lost. The 70-year-olds beat the young ones in an actual study conducted by psychologists.

But these were not ordinary 70-year-olds. They were all mentally active, alert and curious. They read a lot and were also physically active. But for short-term memory, the younger ones beat the older ones.

Katz and Rubin probably got their idea for neurobics training from reported experimental data showing rats that were placed in a rich and mentally stimulating environment. They were made to solve problems daily, go through mazes and remember ever-changing environmental conditions.

This increased the glial cells and reticular formation in their brain by 25 percent as compared to rats placed in a monotonous and boring environment. Glial cells and reticular formation are associated with intelligence.

Doing any task that we don't habitually do strengthens the brain's power

Whether such activities in experimental animals hold true for humans is still a matter of debate among scientists. There are as yet no adequate clinical data available indicating that solving crossword puzzles, playing Scrabble and other mental games will boost a person's I.Q.

Interesting facts

But other interesting facts are beginning to emerge in the field of neuroscience.

For example, it was discovered that, although brain cells or neurons may shrink much as a person ages, and die by the thousands soon after birth, as once believed by scientists, it is now known that the brain exhibits a high degree of plasticity and growth through new neural patterns and inter-connections, which can go on even at advanced ages provided they are constantly stimulated.

However, not all researchers believe that neurobics strengthens brain power. Dr. Richard Snowdon, professor of neurology at the University of Kentucky's Medical Center and author of "Aging with Grace," believes that "mental stimulation in adults may have only a negligible effect in reducing the risk of Alzheimer's." He believes that mental stimulation during the first 12-14 years of life is the key to a healthy brain in the older years.

He says, "The evidence is growing that physical exercise is important in a variety of chronic diseases, including brain diseases. If you have to choose between a crossword puzzle or exercising, get out the door and exercise your entire body."

What's the connection? First, physical exercise boosts blood circulation, including blood flow to the brain, which uses 25 percent of the oxygen entering our lungs; second, it bolsters brain-nurturing chemicals, such as neuropeptides and endorphins.

Third, it reduces stress which has been shown to damage the brain. Fourth, physical activity can also ease depression, which slows down thinking and mental alertness.

The old saying "You can't teach old dogs new tricks" may no longer hold true with the advent of neurobics.

Address letters to this column to 308 Prince Plaza I, 106 Legaspi St., Greenbelt, Makati City, or e-mail jlicauco@edsamail.com.ph. Visit my new website at http://j.licauco.tripod.com. Listen to my DZMM radio program every Sunday, 6-8 p.m.

E-mail jlicauco@geocities.com. Visit website at www.angelfire.com/journal/licauco

Pranic healing helps relieve ailments

WITH the precision and analytical mind of a chemical engineer, for which he carries academic credentials, Master Choa Kok Sui has distilled the techniques and principles of pranic healing into a cookbook-style series anybody can learn in two days.

Thousands of men and women, some of them practicing doctors and nurses in various fields, can attest to the effectiveness of his course.

Fe Pacheco just completed the first day of a two-day workshop on basic pranic healing when her family driver came in with a huge, ugly bump on the forehead, the result of an encounter with a wayward jeepney. The normal reaction would have been to send the man off to a doctor, forehead wrapped in ice.

But Pacheco decided to apply the lessons she learned and managed not only to ease the pain but to flatten the bump.

Since then, she has taken the other courses in the program, and has been one of the resident lecturers of the Institute for Inner Studies (IIS) for nine years now.

The IIS was founded by Master Choa Kok Sui in 1987 with the goal of improving lives physically, mentally, emotionally and financially through ancient Eastern principles.

Pranic is a type of paranormal healing, but Master Choa's method does not require the student to immerse himself or herself in esoteric lore and mysticism. One does not need to possess a "third eye" or demonstrate clairvoyant powers. Past graduates include not only those who love mystical studies but also medical professionals.

Eric Robins, a certified urologist in California, uses pranic healing to improve his success rate in curing acute and chronic illnesses.

One of his patients was suffering from scheroderma, an auto-immune disease that causes scarring in the esophagus and lungs, making swallowing and breathing difficult.

"After walking up one flight of stairs," Dr. Robins writes, the patient would "collapse on the floor for half an hour to catch her breath."

The first pranic healing session gave the patient dramatic relief from joint pains and fatigue. Soon she was running up the stairs and dancing upon arriving home.

Pacheco also narrates the case of a family of doctors in Switzerland, whose brother had suddenly collapsed, but had shown up negative on all the examinations.

A nun, who had taken pranic healing lessons, scanned the patient by reading his energy and health aura with the hands. She found an auric disturbance in the brain area, even though the area had been looked over by the doctors and had shown up negative.

Her insistence on another examination led the doctors to a tiny brain tumor that was pinching an artery, out of sight of regular hospital scanners. The tumor was surgically removed.

Pranic healing is not intended to replace orthodox medicine, Master Choa reminds students, and the two cases are examples of how both can work hand in hand for better, quicker results.

So how does pranic healing work?

Auras and chakras, the linchpin of many Eastern esoteric studies and practices, are to life what blood and major organs are to our bodies. Though ignored by Western medicine, which relies on measurable data, invisible auras and chakras can be felt by the student on the first day of the seminar.

The courses are taught at over 200 IIS centers in over 40 countries.

Call 810-2808, 819-1874, 812-2326, or e-mail innerstudies@pacific.net.ph.

A NUN reads a patient's energy and health aura.

Series of talks on wellness

WELLA'S new Bellady Decoré line of Hair Color presents ZENsation, a series of talks that will reinforce an understanding of a woman's need to balance her physical, mental, emotional and spiritual well-being.

One of the event's speakers and host is television personality and newspaper columnist Cory Quirino. She will talk on "A Holistic Approach in Achieving Balance and Well-Being," and conduct a self-empowerment workshop that touches on beauty, fitness and nutrition.

Tina Aboitiz Juan is a fitness expert who writes the "Well & Good" column for PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER, runs her own gym and hosts "In Fitness and In Health" on Studio 23. She will tackle yoga-based techniques that anyone can do at home, at work or even while sitting in a plane.

Jaime Licauco, an expert on inner-mind development and creative and intuitive management, will talk on "Stress Management." He will discuss methods of controlling stress through mental conditioning and learning how to observe the body's reaction to stressful situations. Through his other talk, entitled "Search for Balance: Body, Mind and Spirit," participants will learn to control headaches and migraines by using mental imagery and the power of imagination.

Another speaker is Sandee Siytangco-Masigan, vice president of Prime Pacific Corporation and part owner of Struan & Tang's Tea Salon. She will talk about the health benefits of tea and other "beau-tea" secrets.

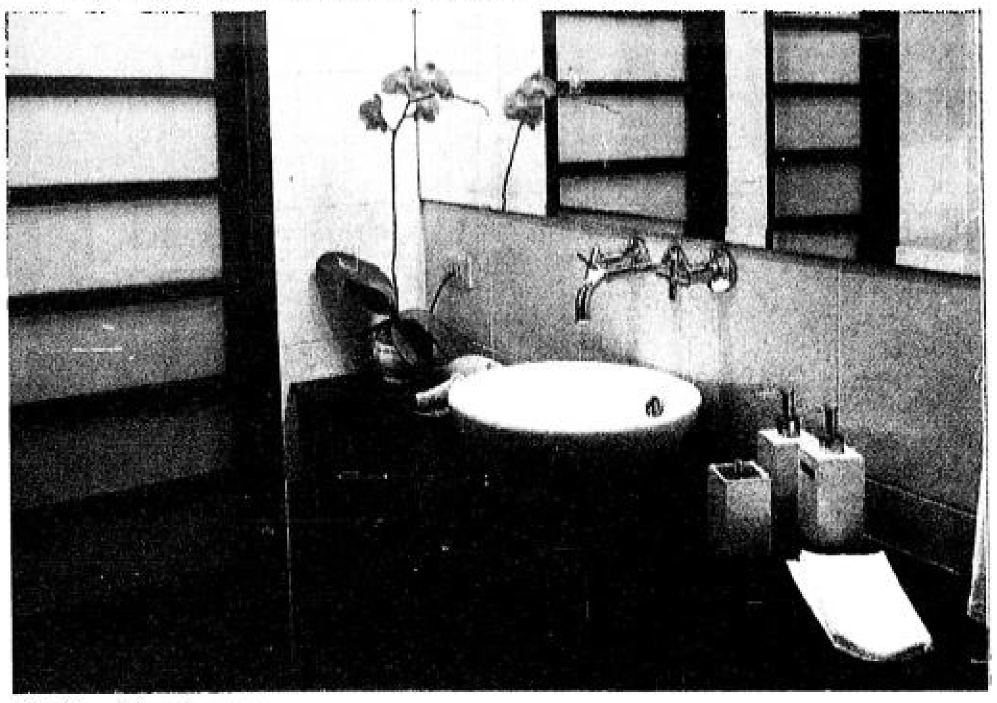
Anna Unson Price, yoga instructor, will discuss the wonders of yoga and methods of achieving balance between the mental and physical, and demonstrate practical yoga positions.

The ZENsation mall tour will be held at Glorietta on Feb. 8-9; Robinson's Place in Ermita, Feb. 15-16; Alabang Town Center, March 15-16; Ayala Mall in Cebu, Feb. 22-23, Robinson's Iloilo, March 1-2; and Gaisano Mall in Davao, March 7-8.

ANNA Price

TINA Juan

SCRUB room with tub



BATH and dressing area

Relaxing retreat

By Cathy Babao Guballa
Photos by Roger Carpio

> Three friends, who share a passion for pampering, put up a spa on Katipunan

MOTHERS know best. They know all about pampering, caring for body, mind and spirit. Ironically, many mothers take for granted caring for themselves.

Three mothers, Mariepaz Canto, Marissa Pastor and Marielou Rodriguez have known each other since their sons were in prep at the Ateneo de Manila University. Their boys are now in college. That's how far back their friendship goes.

Their sisterhood and passion for pampering gave birth to Natural Spa, an oasis of tranquility in Loyola Heights, Katipunan, QC.

"This has been our turf since our children started going to school," Mariepaz said.

With much time in their hands, they decided to go into business in the mid-2002 and set up Natural Spa and its next-door neighbor Profiles Salon.

Stepping into Natural Spa, on the second floor of the building that houses Rustan's Express, is a relaxing experience. The sound of gentle water and the scent of peppermint oil immediately soothe one's harried nerves.

There are 12 Zen-inspired private rooms both for individuals and couples. Each room has Japanese-inspired interiors: soft lighting, tatami doors, subdued colors and Oriental accents. There are rooms specifically designed for massage, body scrubs and facials.

"Majority of our clients are mothers who have children who go to school in the area, college students and residents from nearby villages," Mariepaz said.

Natural Spa is like a sanctuary in the midst of what can sometimes be a busy academic community. Tired mothers, stressed-out students and harassed professors have all found their way to this nook of calm.

On the afternoon that we visited the place, there was even a Jesuit priest waiting for his turn for treatment. Clearly, there must be something divine in the treatments offered at this spa.

Pampering treats

What sets Natural Spa apart from other spas in the vicinity are its all-natural body treatments. Yes, their therapists give great massages as well, but the body wraps, bath soaks and body scrubs are what make a visit to this spa an extra special pampering treat.

The Body Wrap is a body cocoon therapy designed to utilize the natural detoxification process of the body. The purpose of this wrap is to "seal in" the treatment while promoting heat, thereby increasing product absorption and the elimination of toxins from the body through perspiration.

DOUBLE DELIGHT. Couple's room

Spiced Honey and Cucumber Wrap combines the soothing effects of puréed cucumber and natural honey and the therapeutic benefits of essential oil. Honey is widely known for its ability to attract and retain moisture while cucumber is a natural source of Vitamins B1 and C, which are great for treating wrinkles and dry skin.

Another popular choice is the Detox Seaweed Wrap, a nourishing seaweed mask designed to stimulate sluggish metabolism, detoxify one's body, and bring back minerals to your skin. Mariepaz says it is an excellent treatment for cellulite.

To calm your stressed-out souls and tired bodies, there is an array of Bath Soaks to choose from. The Milk Elixir is reminiscent of Cleopatra's famous milk bath, known to be an elixir of eternal youth. Milk, which is rich in calcium, protein, vitamins and lactic acid, is a natural anti-oxidant that hydrates the skin, leaving it soft and pure to the touch.

The Revitalizing Fruit Soak invigorates the body while the skin simultaneously absorbs the healthy benefits of fruits. The fresh fruity scents help lift up your spirits, too. All ingredients used in the natural treatments are fresh and prepared just before the actual treatment itself.

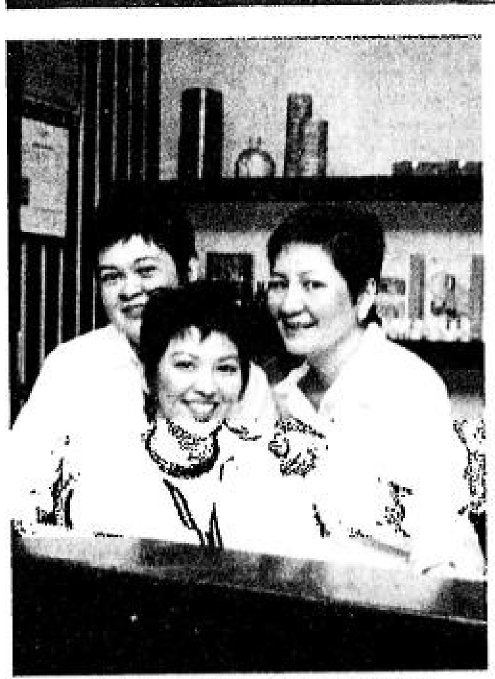
The spa, however, is known for its Body Scrubs, a body treatment that revitalizes the skin while removing dead-cell layers, oil, dirt and other environmental pollutants. The exfoliation process stimulates blood circulation, adds natural minerals to the skin, and creates a fresh and relaxing feeling for both mind and body.

There are several blends you can choose from, depending on the needs of your body and spirit. The Apple Glow scrub keeps dull skin at bay as the acid in the apple acts in the same way as alpha hydroxyl acids found in many beauty products. The gentle exfoliating scrub leaves skin with a clean and fresh glow.

To elevate your mood, try the Invigorating Coffee Scrub, which stimulates and refreshes the body. The finely ground coffee beans refine your skin and perk up your mood.

Chocoholics will enjoy the Blissful Cocoa Scrub, whose main ingredient is chocolate. Chocolate is known to be an aphrodisiac of sorts and those who'll use this scrub will feel light and sexy.

FACIAL-TREATMENT room



FROM left, Marielou Rodriguez, Marissa Pastor and Mariepaz Canto

And since mothers are also known to be a practical bunch, rates at this spa will not stress your pockets. Massage treatments range from P400 (foot massage) to P750 (anti-cellulite massage), while the natural body treatments vary from P400 to P700, depending on the type of treatment requested.

There are also reasonably priced pampering packages that you can avail of if you have the time. Our favorite, and if we only have the luxury of time to treat ourselves once a month, is the Wellness package, a three-hour treatment composed of a natural body scrub, massage treatment and an essential facial.

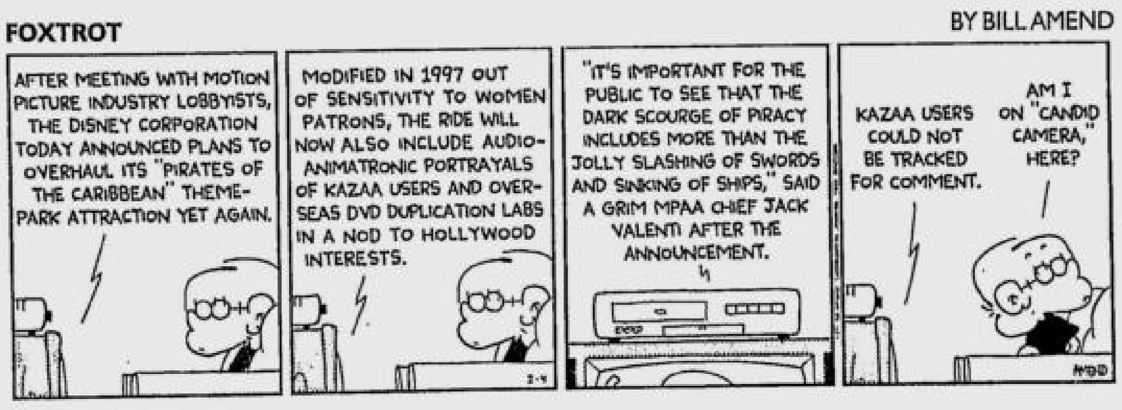
Indeed, caring for one's self should be a priority. After all, mothers like us need pampering too.

Natural Spa is open daily, 11 a.m.-10 p.m. Call 426-9159/9161.

E-mail the author at cbguballa@inquirer.com.ph

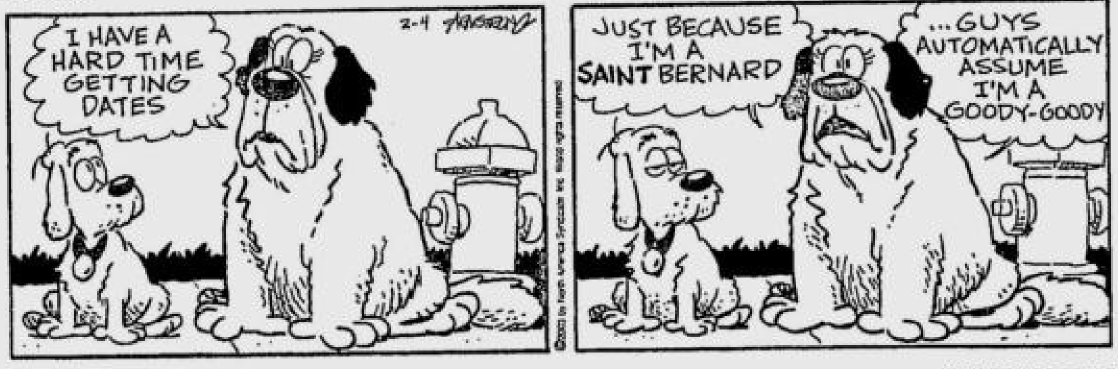
FOXTROT

BY BILL AMEND


AFTER MEETING WITH MOTION PICTURE INDUSTRY LOBBYISTS, THE DISNEY CORPORATION TODAY ANNOUNCED PLANS TO OVERHAUL ITS "PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN" THEME-PARK ATTRACTION YET AGAIN.
MODIFIED IN 1997 OUT OF SENSITIVITY TO WOMEN PATRONS, THE RIDE WILL NOW ALSO INCLUDE AUDIO-ANIMATRONIC PORTRAYALS OF KAZAA USERS AND OVERSEAS DVD DUPLICATION LABS IN A NOD TO HOLLYWOOD INTERESTS.
2-4
"IT'S IMPORTANT FOR THE PUBLIC TO SEE THAT THE DARK SCOURGE OF PIRACY INCLUDES MORE THAN THE JOLLY SLASHING OF SWORDS AND SINKING OF SHIPS," SAID A GRIM MPAA CHIEF JACK VALENTI AFTER THE ANNOUNCEMENT.
DVD
KAZAA USERS COULD NOT BE TRACKED FOR COMMENT.
AM I ON "CANDID CAMERA," HERE?

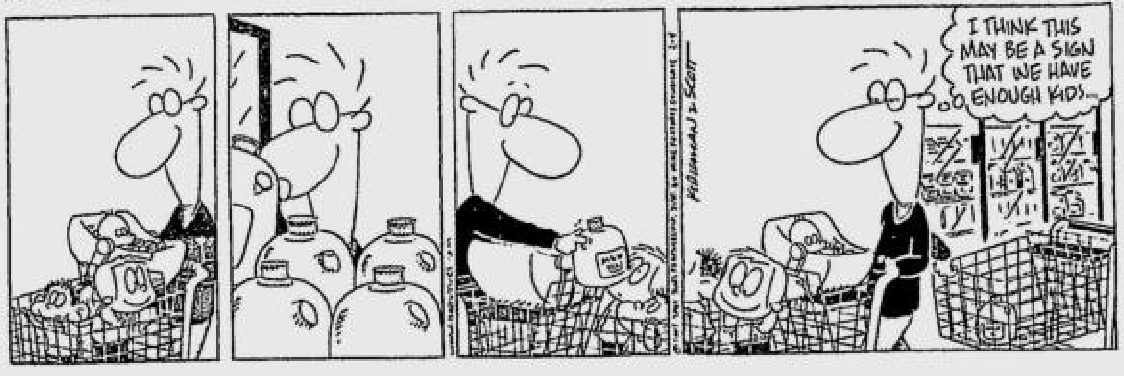
MARVIN

BY TOM ARMSTRONG


2-4 ARMSTRONG
I HAVE A HARD TIME GETTING DATES
JUST BECAUSE I'M A SAINT BERNARD
...GUYS AUTOMATICALLY ASSUME I'M A GOODY-GOODY

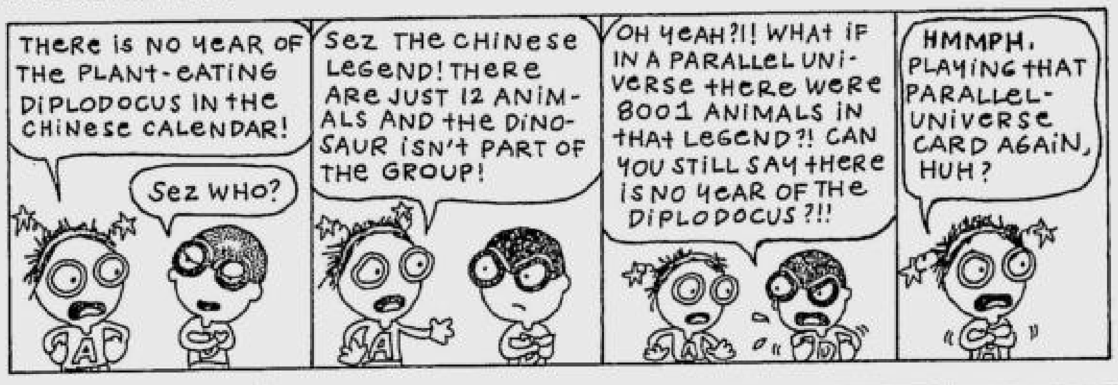
BABY BLUES

BY JERRY SCOTT


KIRKMAN & SCOTT
I THINK THIS MAY BE A SIGN THAT WE HAVE ENOUGH KIDS...

ATOMO AND WEBOY

BY LYRA GARCELLANO


THERE IS NO YEAR OF THE PLANT-EATING DIPLODOCUS IN THE CHINESE CALENDAR!
SEZ WHO?
SEZ THE CHINESE LEGEND! THERE ARE JUST 12 ANIMALS AND THE DINOSAUR ISN'T PART OF THE GROUP!
OH YEAH?!! WHAT IF IN A PARALLEL UNIVERSE THERE WERE 8001 ANIMALS IN THAT LEGEND?! CAN YOU STILL SAY THERE IS NO YEAR OF THE DIPLODOCUS?!!
HMMPH. PLAYING THAT PARALLEL-UNIVERSE CARD AGAIN, HUH?

HOROSCOPE

BY EUGENIA LAST

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Lisa Marie Presley, Princess Stephanie, Lee Thompson Young

Happy Birthday: Your ability to see things clearly will enable you to make the right choices. Your curiosity and intent on learning will prepare you to make whatever changes are required. Your numbers are 13, 25, 27, 32, 35, 44

ARIES (March 21-April 19): Don't be shy about letting others know what your aspirations are. Your involvement in active groups will allow you to demonstrate your leadership qualities.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): Partners may be difficult to deal with. Do not sign contracts unless you have gone over them with a fine-tooth comb. Others may get the wrong impression if you are too open about your personal concerns.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): You should enjoy creative endeavors or physical fitness programs. Take a close look at what you really want for yourself and figure out how to achieve it.

CANCER (June 21-July 22): Problems with older members of the family may be a real burden. Unforeseen bills will cause worry and stress. Gather the family together to see if you can alleviate some of the difficulties.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): Romantic relationships should stabilize. You should experience more harmony together. Pleasure trips will turn out to be better than anticipated.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): You've done your job well, and rewards should follow. Don't sell yourself short. See what salaries and perks are being offered.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): Long-awaited relationships can now begin. You may find that children are not as accepting as you have been. Be patient and give them time. Pamper yourself.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): Don't take on the weight of the world. Getting involved in the personal lives of colleagues will be a big mistake. Be careful what you say to whom and remember information is power.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): Time spent with close friends or relatives will be relaxing and rejuvenating. Those you meet will admire your progressive thoughts and ideas.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): Help those less able to take care of their personal papers on their own. You can make extra cash if you look into small investment opportunities. Do some research first before you invest.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): Don't let your emotions run wild. Deal with your personal life behind closed doors. Speak with clarity.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): Insincere gestures of friendliness are likely to occur if you allow others to find out about your private life. Don't get involved in a love triangle. Keep your reputation spotless.

Birthday Baby: You will always be looking for something new and exciting to occupy your mind and your time. You will be curious as to how things work. You will be bright, articulate and entertaining.

DAILY CROSSWORD

ACROSS
1 Splits roughly
5 Waffle topper
10 Turner of heads?
14 Sandwich cookie
15 Sphere of action
16 English river
17 Liquid meal
19 Damon or Dillon
20 Guarantee
21 Connubial
23 Raised banks along canals
26 Related on mother's side
27 Holding cells
30 Sommelier
33 Between jobs
34 Singer Martina
35 Guy's date
36 Mauna __ volcano
37 Recent electees
38 Was introduced to
41 Mirage, Luxor, et al.
43 Qualified
44 Kitchen gadget
47 Air current
48 Keenly perceptive
49 Blood group
51 Scrapper
54 Treats badly
58 Peak
59 Driver's perch
62 City north of Brussels
63 Azure and ultramarine
64 Bohemian
65 Droops
66 Marsh plant
67 Zap with light

DOWN
1 Judge's garb
2 The __ Duke (Wellington)
3 Church seats
4 Possible to explain
5 "60 Minutes" man
6 Cen. units
7 Early car
8 E pluribus __
9 Dad
10 Thin layers
11 Incarnation of Vishnu
12 Write a score
13 Buck's horn
18 Cinnabar and galena
22 Marsh grasses
24 Arizona pol
25 Deli hero
27 Fishing lure
28 Clare of "Bleak House"
29 Queasy
31 Certain monastery
32 Coal holders
34 Rossini opera, "__ in Egitto"
36 Carnation spot
38 Wharton School deg.
39 North Pole toiler
40 Vietnamese New Year
41 Pins for slots
42 Court divider
43 Simulation
44 Secret plotters
46 Gum arabic tree
46 Mace source
47 Liability
50 Bel __ cheese
52 Wanes
53 Govern
55 Blood fluids
56 Dines
57 Eyelid woe
60 Cow's regurgitated chew
61 Suds container

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65				■	66					■	67			

By Jim Page
New York, NY

2/4/03

Monday's Puzzle Solved

S	L	O	W	■	A	M	A	T	I	■	E	E	R	O
L	I	N	A	■	R	U	N	I	N	■	S	P	A	R
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P	H	I	L	A	N	T	H	R	O	P	I	C	■	■
T	O	R	O	S	■	■	■	R	O	O	■	E	D	S
■	■	■	P	H	I	L	H	A	R	M	O	N	I	C
H	I	B	■	E	R	I	E	■	■	P	A	T	E	R
A	T	R	A	■	S	T	R	O	P	■	S	E	G	O
S	C	A	L	Y	■	■	O	D	E	H	■	R	O	D
P	H	I	L	O	D	E	N	D	R	O	N	■	■	■
S	Y	N	■	G	E	R	■	■	■	T	O	S	C	A
■	■	P	H	I	L	O	S	O	P	H	I	C	A	L
A	L	A	I	■	U	D	A	L	L	■	S	O	R	T
W	I	N	K	■	D	E	L	L	A	■	E	R	T	E
L	E	S	E	■	E	S	S	A	Y	■	S	E	E	R

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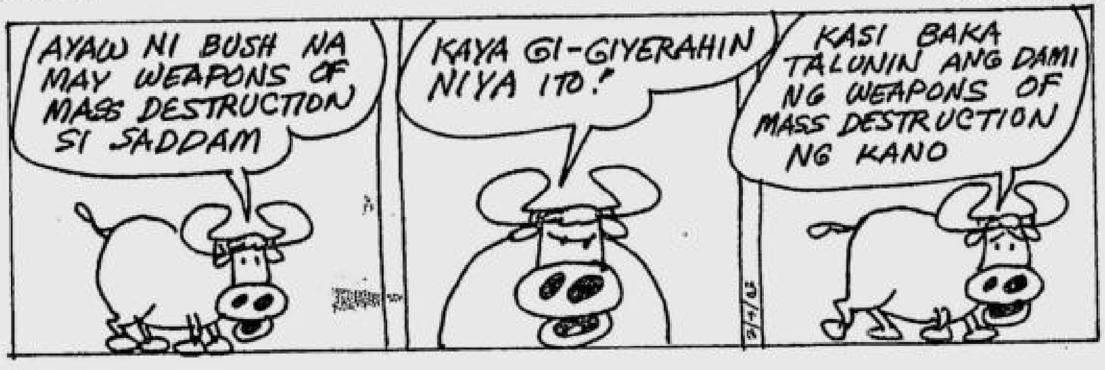
2/4/03

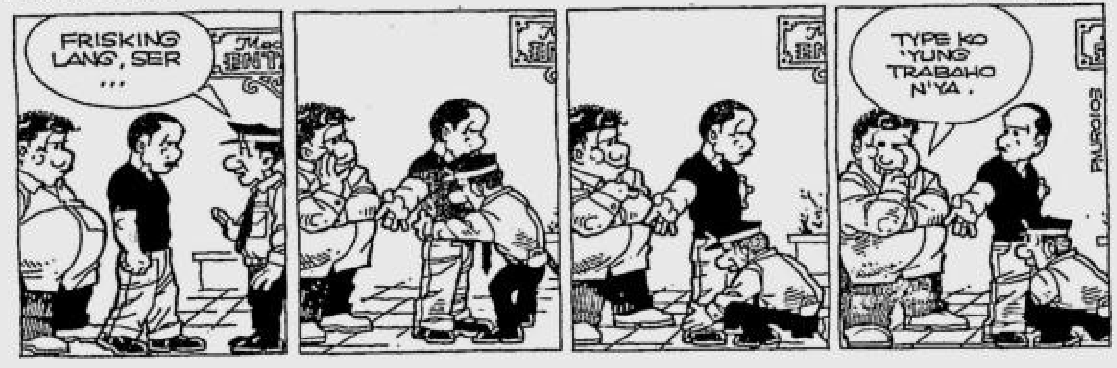
A. LIPIN

BY JESS ABRERA


AYAW NI BUSH NA MAY WEAPONS OF MASS DESTRUCTION SI SADDAM
KAYA GI-GIYERAHIN NIYA ITO!
KASI BAKA TALUNIN ANG DAMI NG WEAPONS OF MASS DESTRUCTION NG KANO
2/4/03

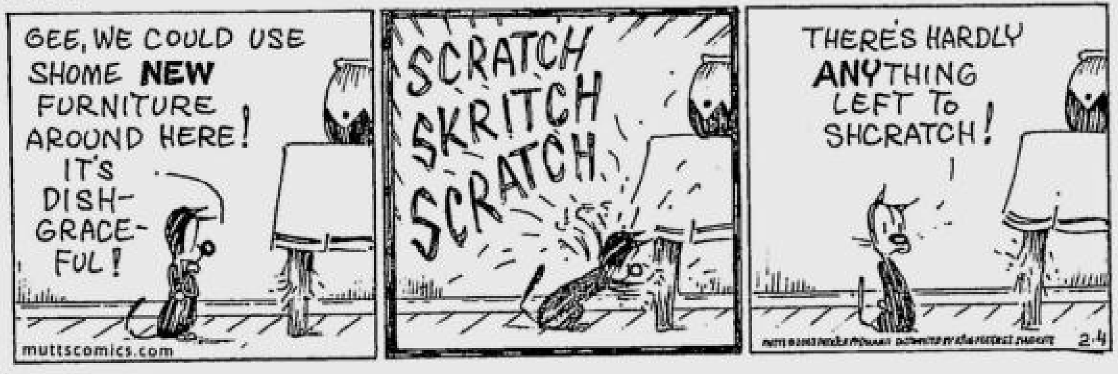
PUGAD BABOY

BY P.M. JUNIOR


FRISKING LANG, SER ...
TYPE KO 'YUNG TRABAHO N'YA.
PJ020103

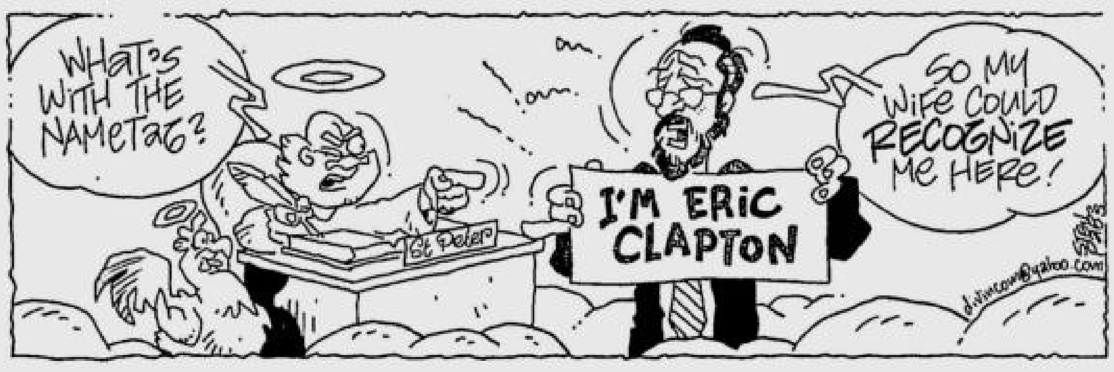
MUTTS

BY PATRICK McDONNELL


GEE, WE COULD USE SHOME NEW FURNITURE AROUND HERE! IT'S DISH-GRACE-FUL!
muttscomics.com
SCRATCH SKRITCH SCRATCH
THERE'S HARDLY ANYTHING LEFT TO SHCRATCH!
2-4

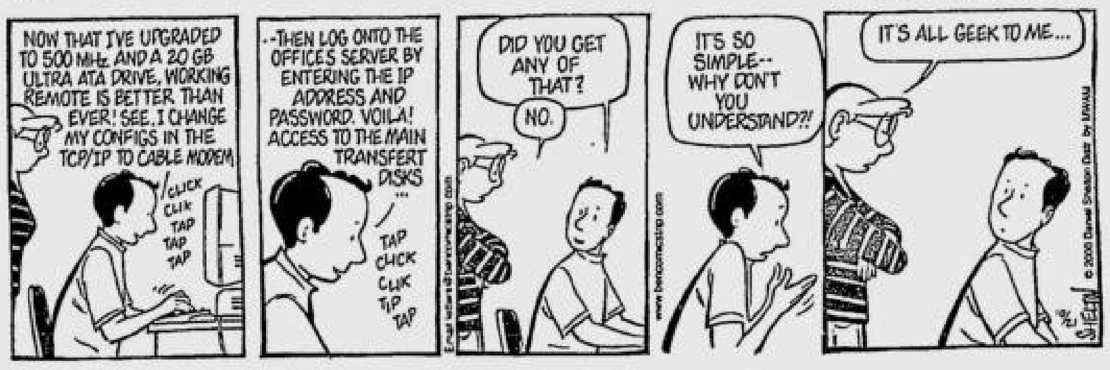
DIVINE COMEDY

BY STEVEN PABALINAS


WHAT'S WITH THE NAMETAG?
St Peter
I'M ERIC CLAPTON
SO MY WIFE COULD RECOGNIZE ME HERE!
divinecom@yahoo.com

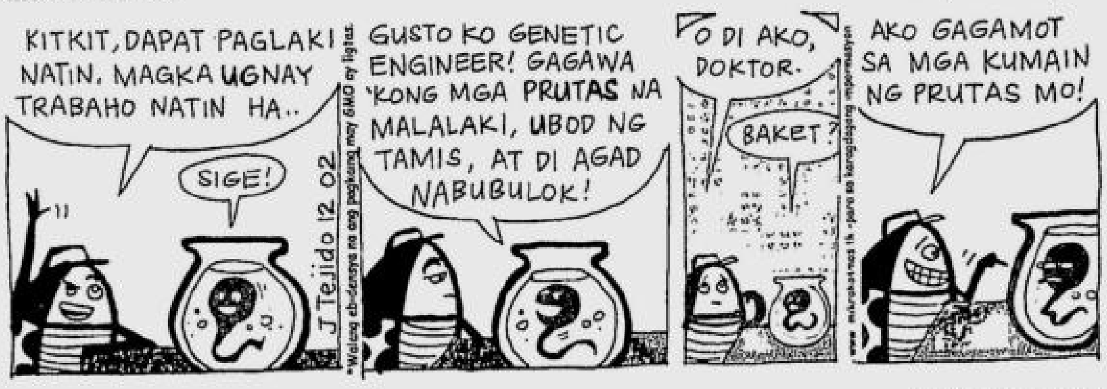
BEN

BY DANIEL SHELTON


NOW THAT I'VE UPGRADED TO 500 MHz AND A 20 GB ULTRA ATA DRIVE, WORKING REMOTE IS BETTER THAN EVER! SEE, I CHANGE MY CONFIGS IN THE TCP/IP TO CABLE MODEM
CLICK CLIK TAP TAP TAP
-THEN LOG ONTO THE OFFICES SERVER BY ENTERING THE IP ADDRESS AND PASSWORD. VOILA! ACCESS TO THE MAIN TRANSFERT DISKS ...
TAP CHCK CLIK TIP TAP
DID YOU GET ANY OF THAT?
NO.
IT'S SO SIMPLE-- WHY DON'T YOU UNDERSTAND?!
IT'S ALL GEEK TO ME...
SHELTON

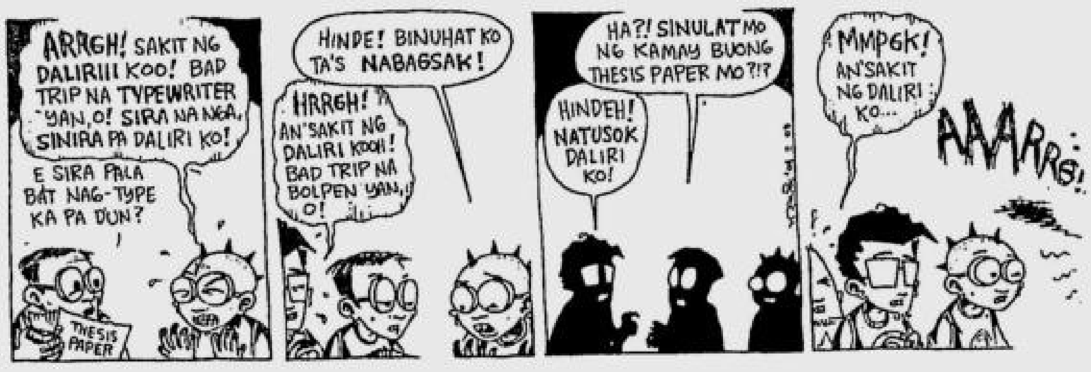
MIKROKOSMOS

BY JOMIKE TEJIDO


KITKIT, DAPAT PAGLAKI NATIN, MAGKA UGNAY TRABAHO NATIN HA..
SIGE!
J Tejido 12 02
GUSTO KO GENETIC ENGINEER! GAGAWA 'KONG MGA PRUTAS NA MALALAKI, UBOD NG TAMIS, AT DI AGAD NABUBULOK!
O DI AKO, DOKTOR.
BAKET?
AKO GAGAMOT SA MGA KUMAIN NG PRUTAS MO!

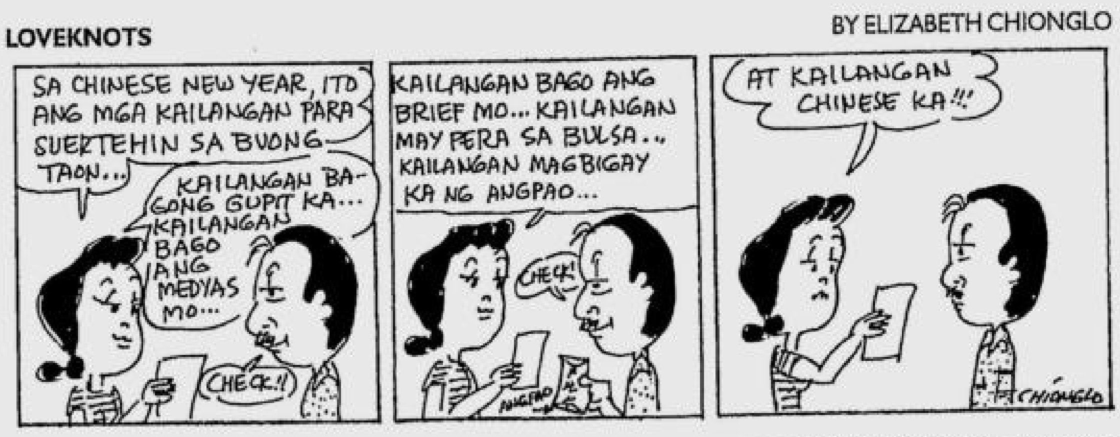
KIKO MACHINE

BY MANIX ABRERA


ARRGH! SAKIT NG DALIRIII KOO! BAD TRIP NA TYPEWRITER 'YAN, O! SIRA NA NGA, SINIRA PA DALIRI KO!
E SIRA PALA BAT NAG-TYPE KA PA DUN?
THESIS PAPER
HINDE! BINUHAT KO TA'S NABAGSAK!
HRRGH! AN'SAKIT NG DALIRI KOOH! BAD TRIP NA BOLPEN 'YAN,! O!
HA?! SINULAT MO NG KAMAY BUONG THESIS PAPER MO?!?
HINDEH! NATUSOK DALIRI KO!
MMPGK! AN'SAKIT NG DALIRI KO...
AAARRG!

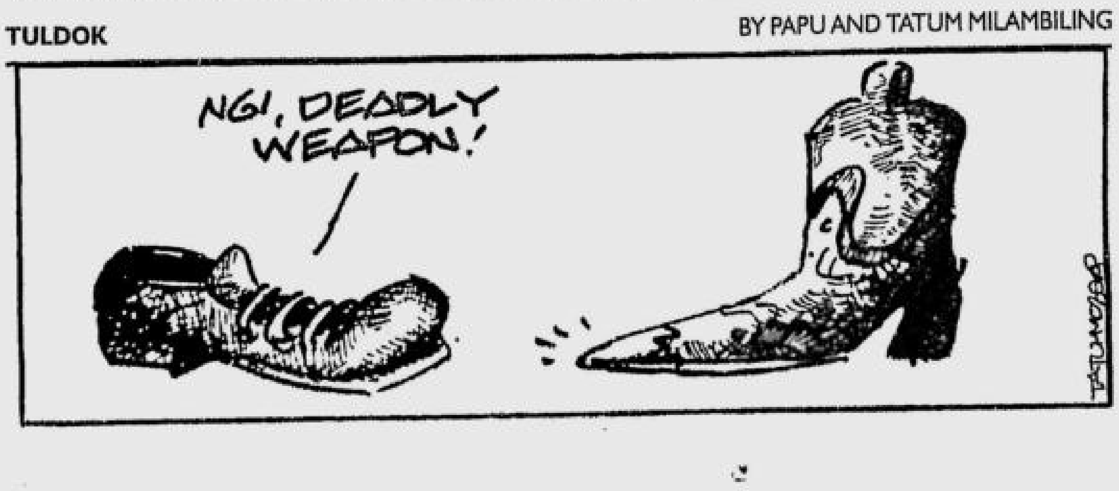
LOVEKNOTS

BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


SA CHINESE NEW YEAR, ITO ANG MGA KAILANGAN PARA SUERTEHIN SA BUONG TAON...
KAILANGAN BAGONG GUPIT KA... KAILANGAN BAGO ANG MEDYAS MO...
CHECK!!
KAILANGAN BAGO ANG BRIEF MO... KAILANGAN MAY PERA SA BULSA... KAILANGAN MAGBIGAY KA NG ANGPAO...
CHECK!
ANGPAO
AT KAILANGAN CHINESE KA!!!
CHIONGLO

TULDOK

BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING


NGI, DEADLY WEAPON!
TATUM

Negros Occidental gets on the bandwagon

By Butch Hernandez
Contributor

THE CAMPAIGN to foster a healthy mind and a healthy body among young Filipinos by saving the public school system has reached the Visayas.

Two Education Revolution core teams led by the La Consolacion College in Bacolod and the First Farmers Human Development Foundation Inc. in Talisay City, Negros Occidental, have jointly adopted the Villa Esperanza Elementary School in Bacolod City and the Bubog Elementary School, Purita Lacson Elementary School, Ma. Eustaquia Lizares Elementary School and the San Fernando Elementary School, all in Talisay City.

FWWPP community development consultant Elizabeth Cabuguas of the Assumption College Center for Social Concern set up the core teams to spearhead the formal launching of the Education Revolution in Negros Occidental on Jan. 23.

FWWPP president Eugenia D. Apostol and director Maria Lim Ayuyao will attend.

The La Consolacion College core team is composed of Dean Sr. Myrna Concepcion, OSA; Liberal Arts dean Dr. Ma. Lilia Tacardon, Architecture dean Roger Diaz, Dr. Ma. Mercedes A. Joson, head of Research and Development; Milagros Leeping, principal of the elementary department; and faculty members Judith Torrefranca, Ms Amahit and Gina Montes, Luisa Howard of the Circulo de Bacolod, Soroptimist Club's Fely Porter, Rose Depra of the Negros Economic Development Foundation Inc., and Leslie Abello of the First Farmers Human Development Foundation, Inc. (FFHDFI).

The FFHDFI core team is led by FFHDFI executive director Andrea Si and includes Ligaya Siana, Edith Besa, Avelly Absalom, Janet Villanueva, Veronica Benajeba, Leslie Abello and Vicky Pasustento.

FIRST Farmers Human Development Inc. president Bernard Trepol (center) signs the memorandum of agreement with Susan Parique of the Eustaquia Lizares Elementary School and Mariolina Johnson of Bubog Elementary School

SIGNING the Memorandum of Agreement are La Consolacion College-Bacolod's Mother Assumpta Hormillasa, president Alfredo Gonzales and principal Marcial Lindayao. Standing is Dr. Ma. Mercedes Joson

FELICITAS Arroyo and Maria Lim Ayuyao, both board of trustees of the Foundation for Worldwide Power, pose with the adopting partners of Wella Esperanza Elementary school

The Villa Esperanza Elementary School is located in the former solid-waste landfill in Bacolod City that was closed in 1994 due to numerous complaints. Work on Villa Esperanza Elementary School started in 1995. The school now has 400 pupils from grades 1 to 6.

Western Visayas joins the Education Revolution

LCC, with the Rotary Club of Bacolod City Central, donated earlier books from the Mother Rita Barcelo Community Center, a stove for the home economics classes, and covered the floor with linoleum for the pupils to sit on as there were no chairs and tables.

A total of 1,157 children of landless sugar workers go to Bubog Elementary School, Purita Lacson Elementary School, the Ma. Eustaquia Lizares Elementary School and the San Fernando Elementary School.

The FFHDFI found out that all four schools need potable water, sanitation facilities and more textbooks and instructional materials. A school-feeding program is also needed because pupils tend to be under-nourished.

Relaunch in Davao

Davao City Councilor Mabel Sunga Acosta said the Davao City Local School Board would re-launch the Adopt-a-School project in the city.

The councilor is the chair of the committee on education.

Albay principal appeals

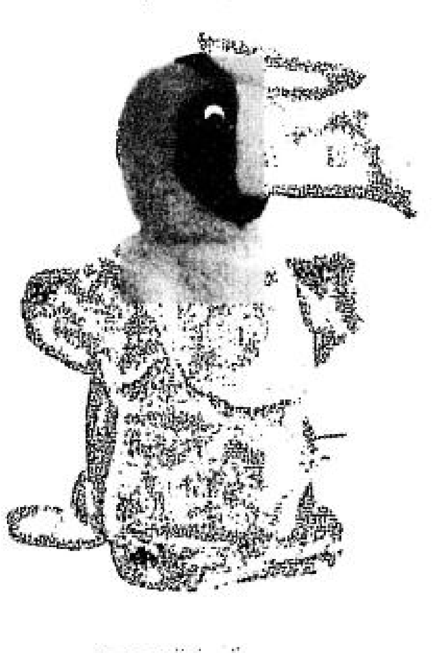
Erlinda M. Arao, principal of the Rapu Rapu Elementary School in Albay, is seeking assistance for 6,000 pupils and 186 teaching personnel in her district.

Rapu Rapu Island, a 5th-class municipality, has 34 elementary schools and four barangay high schools. The schools need help in improving their facilities.

Ifugao wants in

Ifugao Vice Gov. Bella Gano-Takinan has sent a copy of their Sangguniang Panlalawigan Board Resolution No. 2002-757, asking FWWPP to include the province in the Education Revolution.

Gifts for the environment



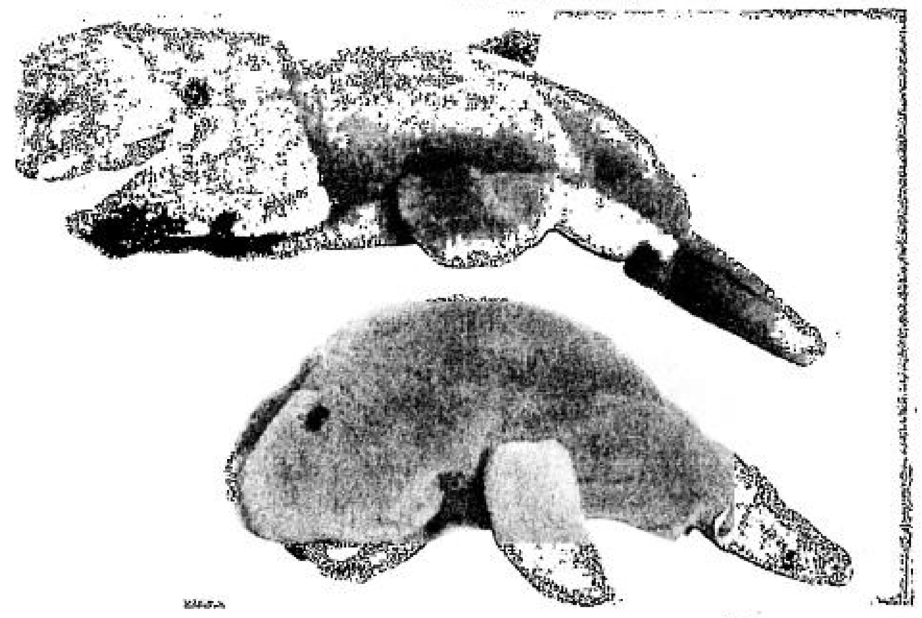
GIVE your loved ones hand puppets developed by Savy Toys for Haribon Foundation.

These puppets feature Philippine endemic and endangered animals. It also gives an idea of where these animals live, their present condition, and how we can help save them.

Everyone will have a grand time playing with the Philippine Eagle, Philippine Tamaraw, Philippine Tarsier, Mynah, and Bleeding Heart Pigeon.

A portion from the sale of each puppet is donated to the Haribon Foundation, to assist the foundation in continuing its conservation work.

The Haribon office is located at Suites 401-404 Fil Garcia Tower, 140 Kalayaan Ave. corner Mayaman St., Diliman, QC; Gift Gate outlets in Glorietta, Alabang Town Center, and SM Megamall; and Hotel Intercontinental gift shop.



Caring for the abandoned

THE QUEEN of Peace Center in Naga is home to over 30 orphans, ages ranging from 0 to 16 years old. But sometimes, this number swells to as many as 50 children.

The Center provides for the daily needs of their wards, including food, clothing, shelter, healthcare, recreation, spiritual and moral formation.

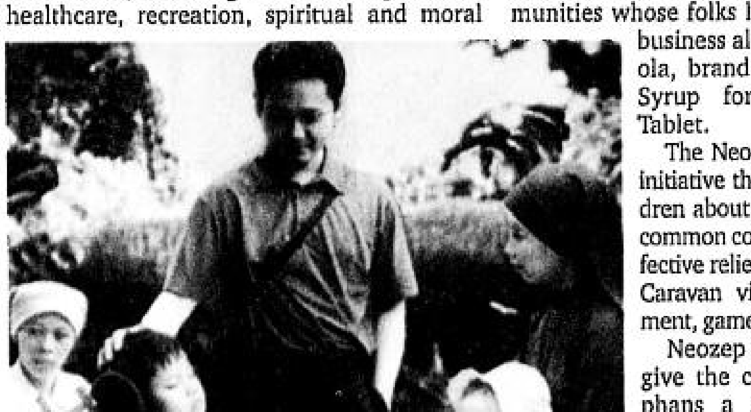
Just recently, the Neozep Cold Caravan visited the Queen of Peace Center.

"It has become an informal practice for the Neozep Cold Caravan to visit orphanages. It is our own little way of giving back to the communities whose folks have been helping our business all along," says GF Gaviola, brand manager for Neozep Syrup for Kids and Neozep Tablet.

The Neozep Cold Caravan is an initiative that aims to educate children about the best way to handle common colds and offer fast and effective relief. During a Neozep Cold Caravan visit, there is entertainment, games and prizes for kids.

Neozep also makes it a point to give the caregivers of these orphans a substantial supply of Neozep Syrup for Kids.

To know more about this children's center or if you wish to make a donation, visit Mother Joan Claire at The Queen of Peace Center, Bgy. Bagumbayan, Naga City or call (054) 472-3325.



GF Gaviola, brand manager for Neozep for Kids and Neozep Tablet, with the Missionaries of the Poor Sisters and their wards

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IDS MEDIA AWARDS 200

FROM left: ASP program manager Dr. Dominic Garcia, ASP president Dr. Ofelia Monsod, AMA 2002 Best News Feature in Print winner Cher Jimenez of Today, AMA 2002 Best Cartoon Editorial winner Rio Villegas of SunStar Cebu, AMA 2002 Best Cartoon Strip winner Washington Young of the Manila Bulletin, ASP program officer Josie de la Cruz and ASP vice president Dr. Carlos Calica

AIDS Media Awards winners named

MORE than a hundred AIDS advocates gathered at the PIA Auditorium in Diliman, Quezon City, recently for the 4th AIDS Media Awards (AMA), an annual contest that recognizes the role of print and broadcast media companies in the dissemination of valuable information on HIV/AIDS.

The event was organized by the AIDS Society of the Philippines (ASP), a non-stock, nonprofit organization that focuses on HIV/AIDS prevention, in partnership with the Ford Foundation and the Philippine Information Agency.

Among those who were present included ASP president Dr. Ofelia Monzon, who gave the welcome remarks; Health Sec. Manuel Dayrit, who delivered the keynote speech; PIA director Gen. Renato Velasco, Caridad Tharan of the Ford Foundation, Mildred Ortega and Nonoy Zuñiga of "Kapwa Ko Mahal Ko," and 1999 AMA awardee Judith Tones.

Emelyn Libunao of PIA, Gani Oro of Teledyaryo, and Martin Antonio Crisostomo of Newslight were the event's hosts.

Representatives from the Samahan ng mga Kartunista were present to honor their colleagues in the industry. The PIA's Black Theater Group performed to welcome the guests.

Winners of the 2002 AMA were: Best News Feature in Print, Cher Jimenez of Today, first place for her article "Choosing to Live Despite AIDS"; Tito Valiente, also of Today, second place for "Closet Compassion: Images of HIV/AIDS in a Society That Does Have a Cure For It"; and Stella Estrernera of SunStar, third place for "In Defense of Condoms... and Other Issues in the AIDS Ordinance."

TV's Best News Feature winners were: "Panibagong Pag-asa" by Gina Cecilia Ramos of ABS-CBN for the show "Pipol," first place; "Liwanag sa Gitna ng Lagim" by Dominic Almelor of GMA 7 for the show "Extra Extra," second place; and "Cure for AIDS" by Elizabeth Raymundo of ANC Channel 21 for the show "Point Blank," third place.

For the Best Cartoon Editorial category, all winners came from publication companies in the south: Rio Villegas of SunStar Cebu City, first place for "Let's Join Hands"; Gualberto Licong Jr. of SunStar General Santos, second place for "RA 8504: Implementation Ongoing"; and Ariel Roy Basilio of Zamboanga Today, third place, for "Your Projection is their Protection."

RINA Jimenez-David of DZAR receives the third Best News Feature in Radio award from ASP program manager Dr. Dominic Garcia (left) and ASP president Dr. Ofelia Monzon (center).

In the Best Cartoon Strip category, the leading newspapers produced top winners: Washington Young's "Pupung" series in the Manila Bulletin won first place; Renato Aranda's strip "Prof" in the Philippine Star, second place; and Tatum Milambiling's "AIDS" in the PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER, third place.

For the Best News Feature in Radio category, winners were: Glenn Allanigue of DWSS, for "Special Report: AIDS," first place; Liliosa Malasa of DZAR, for "Home and Community Care for Persons Living with HIV," second place; and Rina Jimenez-David of DZAR, for "Pag-aalaga ng Taong Namumuhay sa HIV," third place.

The major prize is an all-expense-paid study tour to Thailand plus an opportunity to visit different partner non-government and government organizations with HIV/AIDS media programs, plus pocket money worth $500.

Special citations were also handed out by Caridad Tharan and ASP vice president Dr. Carlos Calica to Renato Aranda of the Philippine Star, Stella Estremera of SunStar Davao, and DZAR Angel Radio, for their exceptional efforts in disseminating information that discussed HIV/AIDS and other related issues.

The event also coincided with the launching of the 2003 AIDS Media Awards by ASP program manager Dr. Dominic Garcia and program officer Josie dela Cruz.

Dr. Garcia announced the addition of a special category, Photo Journalism in black and white, which will be open to all professional photojournalists.

All entries should be published or broadcast from Oct. 16, 2002, to Sept. 15, 2003. The grand prize will be an all-expense-paid trip to Japan.

Application forms are available at the ASP at OF Rm. 401 Doria Felisa Syjuco Bldg., 1872 Remedios St., Malate, Manila, and at PIA. Call 536-5509/5694, fax 536-5512, or e-mail aidsphil@pacific.net.ph.

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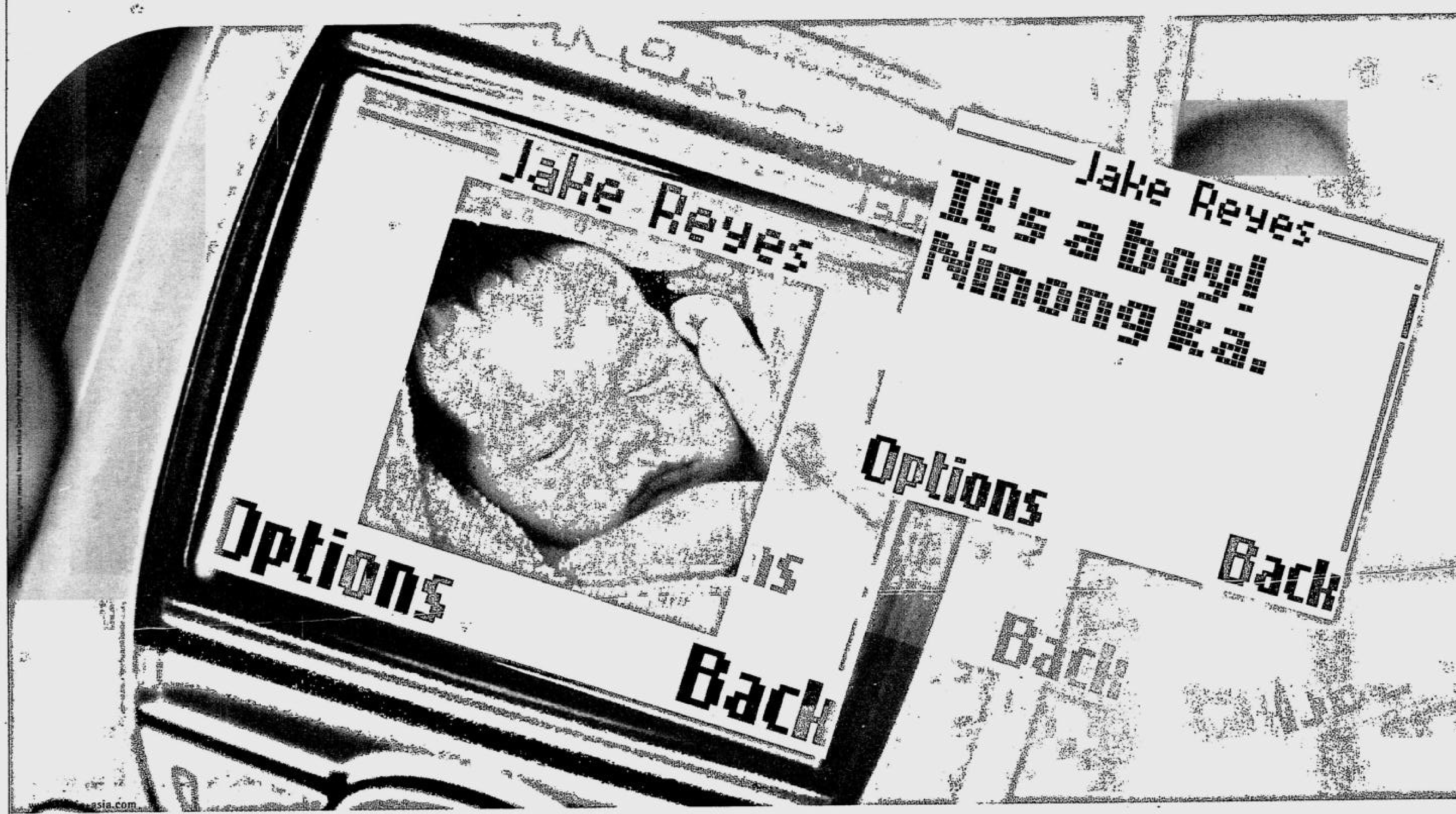
CONNECTING PEOPLE



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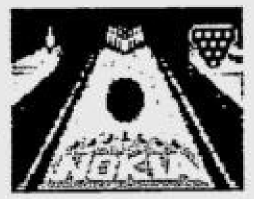
happiest moments
in full color with
the new Nokia 3530

The new Nokia 3530, a multimedia messaging-capable phone that lets you send images with text and receive or download images and tones to enjoy pure MMS fun. With polyphonic sound, colored screen plus cool wallpapers and exciting JAVA™ games, the Nokia 3530 is surprisingly affordable!

High Resolution Screen with 4,096 Colors • Multimedia Messaging Service (MMS) Capability
Preloaded and Erasable Java™ Games in Color • Xpress-on™ Active, Reactive and Gaming Color Covers
Mobile Services: GPRS, WAP, and HSCSD • Fun Calendar and Wallpapers



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